

SRI SRI
PREMA DHAMA DEVA STOTRAM

HIS DIVINE GRACE
SRILA BHAKTI RAKSHAK SRIDHAR DEV GOSWAMI MAHARAJ

Sri Sri Prema-Dhama-Deva-Stotram

His Divine Grace
Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

with additional teachings and the illuminating insights
of exalted devotees of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, Nabadwip Dham, India

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Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, Nabadwip

Published by:
Anadi Krishna Das Kriti Ratna
Sri Govinda Dham, Australia.

Exclusively for:
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, Kolerganj, Nabadwip,
District of Nadia, West Bengal, India.

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His Divine Grace Om Vishnupad
Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyya Astotara-sata Sri Srimad
Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

Sri Sridhar Stuti

by Srila Bhakti Vicar Yajabar Maharaj

*sri-bhakti-rakshaka-sridhar guru gaura prestha
yanra stava stuti suni guru hana tusta*

Srila Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar, so close to Sri Guru and Gaura, by hearing your praise divine, highly pleased is Sri Guru, mine.

*sanskṛta-bhasaya bahu kirtana racial
yaha gahi amadera bhakati badila*

Many ancient sanskrit compositions you composed as sweet glorifications, and as your happy tunes are sung our devotion blossoms, all along.

*brahmana kulete tumi janama labhila
pracya-pascatyā siksaya sikita haila*

In a brahmin's family so pure, you came into this world, matured, along with eastern culture's trace in western ways and thought you're a genius.

*brahmana dharmera para vaisnava dharma
iha bhuji bujahaila era sukha marma*

From the relative strings of the brahmin's thread you come with Vaishnava practices overhead, you understood their differences so fine, and brought to life this happy message divine.

*bhakati rakshaka tare guru nama dila
apani acari dharma pracara karila*

Thus you assured pure devotion's protection; "Bhakti Rakhsaka" your Guru named you in elation, your pure example is always there while preaching real truth everywhere.

*aprakata kale guru tomara mukhete
kirtana suniya gela goloka dhamete*

When our Divine Master's time drew near, his desire was from your mouth to hear, your voice singing Sri Narottama Thakur's divine bhajan: Hearing Sri Rupa's kirtan from your lips he entered Goloka Dham.

*varttama mula mathe apani acarya
prabhupada-sthapilena matha-raja-varya*

Srila Prabhupad, our Gurudeva, established many temples during his stay, and nowadays in your beautiful Math you carry Guru's weight, perfectly taught.

*tomara vicara suni haye camatkara
pascatyā o bahu sisya haile tomara*

Hearing your happy language sweet, so wonderful it set my heart afleet, now from western lands they come, so many disciples, accepting your home.

*ei rupa bahuta guna achaya tomate
bhaktagana varnibena janiya nisicte*

In this way your spiritual qualities abound, in your person, no limit to be found; devotees in the future will certainly describe, once they factually know these points sublime.

*tomara jivanamrta isat sparsiya
kirtana karinu sesa bhakti vicariya*

I have only lightly touched upon the glories your ambrosial life. And now I, Bhakti Vicar Yajabar, considering devotion's ways, end my personal song in your praise.

*tomara stavanakari bahuta achaya
dina yajabara tava nama guna gaya*

There's so many, yes it's unknown, how many sing your glories in various tunes.

srimac-caitanya-saraswata-mathavara-udgita-kirtir jaya-srim
bibhrat sambhati ganga-tata-nikata-navadvipa-koladri-raje
yatra sri-gaura-saraswata-mata-nirata-gaura-gatha grnanti
nityam rupanuga sri-krtamati-guru-gauranga-radha-jitasa

In the Holy Abode of transcendental touchstone
Sri Nabadwip Dham - the selfsame Sri Vrindavan,
in the land of Koladwip, whose inner identity
is the King of mountains Sri Govarddhan,
near the charming shores of the holy River Bhagirathi
who delivers all the fallen souls,
stands that grand and glorious King of all Temples -
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math.

In that beautiful retreat, the surrendered devotees
whose lives are the message of Sri Gaura,
are eternally absorbed in the loving service
of the Divine Master, the Golden Lord Gauranga
and the Loving Lord Sri Govindasundar
with His consort Srimate Gandharvva,
accompanied by all Their beloved associates.

With hearts always filled with good hope
to attain the grace of the Lord,
following faithfully in the line
of Sri Sri Rupa and Raghunath -
the storekeepers of the unlimited treasure
of pure, sweet love divine -
those surrendered souls ever sing the unending glories
of the transcendental name and qualities
of the most magnanimous, original Supreme Lord
Sri Sri Gaurangasundar.

Indeed the hearts of all beings, moving and still,
marvel in the glory of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math
as they take shelter in the soothing shade
of the victory flag that flies aloft
and sings wholeheartedly to the world the ever-expanding
renown of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math;
bearing that banner of all transcendental benedictions,
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math ever shines resplendent
in all its divine magnificence.



Sri Govinda Kunda Gupta-Govarddhana Arati
by
Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaj

jaya jaya girirajer arati visala
sri gauramandala majhe bhuvanamangala
All glories, all glories, to the grand arati of Sri Giriraj!
In the midst of Sri Gaura-mandal, it is benefitting the entire universe.

koladwipe sobhe gupta-govarddhanarupa
vyakta haila sri govinda kunde aparupa
The hidden Govardhan graces Koladwip with its beauty. Now it has manifested
its exquisite beauty in Sri Govinda Kunda.

malati-madhavikunja kandare kandare
nigudha-nikunjalila hari-manohare
There are groves of malati and madhavi flowers in its various caves. In these
groves, Lord Hari plays His hidden, mysterious, and enchanting pastimes.

apurva kundera sobha yena sudhabhanda
surendra-surabhi-seva-saubhagya-marttanda

The incomparable beauty of the Kunda is like a reservoir of honey. Even Lord Indra and the divine Surabhi cow are rendering their service under the shining sun of good fortune.

*sri bhaktiraksaka devagoswami sridhara
prakasila tava seva dipta manohara*

Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj has manifested the effulgent and enchanting devotional service to You.

*sri chaitanya-saraswata matha susobhana
yatha nitya seva kare saraswatagana*

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math is a beautiful place where devotees in the line of Srila Prabhupad Sara-swati Thakur are always rendering their devotional service.

*goswami sriraghunatha dasere smariya
nirantara seva kare antarmana haiya*

Remembering Sri Raghunath Das Goswami, they are continuously serving in an introspective mood.

*jaya gupta-govarddhana divya-rasalaya
ruparaghunathanuga-bhaktera asraya*

All glories to the hidden Govarddhan, which is a reservoir of transcendental rasa. It is the refuge of the devotees who are following in the footsteps of Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath.

*kuliya-prakasa tava achintya-mahima
divanisi bhaktavrnda kare parikrama*

By Your inconceivable glories and magnanimity, You have manifested Kuliya (where all offences are forgiven). Day and night, the multitude of devotees is circumambulating this place.

*sevyo o sevakarupe nitya parakasa
sanande arati dekhe e adhamadasa*

You are eternally manifested both as the worshipable Lord and as the servitor Lord. This fallen servant sees Your arati with great joy.

In Glorification of Srila Guru Maharaj by Tridandi Bhiksu Bhakti Pavan Janardan Maharaj

We are all eternally fortunate to be able to remember and praise the outstanding qualities of Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj.

Srila Guru Maharaj, as he is affectionately called by his followers, is our real "Guardian of Devotion," who has appeared in this world to give us the most beautiful and elevated perception of what is Reality, and at the same time to protect the devotion of innumerable souls who have taken shelter at his lotus feet.

In the *Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita*, Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami, remarks that even Sesa Naga, with thousands and thousands of mouths, speaking for eternity, could not exhaust the glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. So, not to make an excuse for my own inability, but to express what is certain, I also have to say that no presentation could really adequately glorify what are the unlimited devotional qualities of Srila Guru Maharaj.

We have heard that Sri Krishnadas Babaji, the dear Godbrother of Srila Guru Maharaj, often visited Sri Hapaniya Dham, the divine place of his appearance. When Srila Babaji Maharaj was asked why he visited there, why he paid so much respect to the place of birth of a Godbrother, he replied that all his life he was hearing and singing the poetry and songs of Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupad, and had concluded, "I do not see any difference between what you have written and what he has given." It was his conclusion that their expressions were of the same quality.

From the time that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, before his imminent departure from this world, asked Srila Guru Maharaj to sing *Sri Rupa-manjari-pada*, the most revered and beautiful expression of our highest ideal, Srila Guru Maharaj's most elevated and trusted Godbrothers all held him in a special position. Great spiritual personalities who were present at that time felt that when Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupad asked Srila Guru Maharaj to sing, that a divine transmission occurred in which Srila Prabhupad chose Srila Guru Maharaj as the representative of the line of Srila Rupa Goswami as the guardian of our mission. And like Srila Babaji Maharaj, Srila Guru Maharaj's Godbrothers sought his advice and his approval, even those who were senior to him in the mission of Srila Saraswati Thakur.

Srila Guru Maharaj captured the hearts of everyone, both faithful followers and adversaries, not only because he was the most qualified representative of our line, and chosen by his Guru, but because of his natural qualities and the purity of his heart. Once a rival, a person from another philosophical camp, came to hear from Srila Guru Maharaj. That person was respected in the community as a great and erudite scholar. When Guru Maharaj saw him, he asked him why he had come to visit him. That man expressed, "That is because in you we see three unique qualities: super intelligence, a disinterested nature and strong common sense."

It is the nature of this world that even a saint is sometimes abused or not understood. We have heard Srila Govinda Maharaj, the chosen successor and intimate disciple of Srila Guru Maharaj, express that when a thesis is presented, immediately the antithesis also arises. Srila Guru Maharaj could confront any challenge and defend the dignity of the Gaudiya Vaishnava line.

Once in Karachi, Srila Guru Maharaj was challenged, "If the infinitesimal can understand the Infinite, then He is not infinite."

This, of course, refers to the understanding that if the conditioned soul can know the infinite Lord, then He would not be truly infinite. But Srila Guru Maharaj simply replied, "If the Infinite cannot make Himself known to the infinitesimal, then He is not infinite."

No one could defeat him in an argument, and in his presence, no other line could have pre-eminence.

But in his own words, Srila Guru Maharaj described himself as a "back-pushing man." He would never take the initiative in a violent confrontation, and even when personally attacked, he would say, "Is that all they have to say about me. That is not so bad. I am much worse than that." He beautifully demonstrated Sri Gauranga's advice of always exhibiting humility, tolerance and respect for others. This he did naturally, because his heart was so magnanimous and full of all those Vaishnava qualities and sentiments.

We are most fortunate that in Srila Guru Maharaj's advanced age, he has accepted us and given us a place in his heart. We have come in contact with the highest Vaishnava, who is of the magnitude of the great Acharyyas in our line, whose

conclusions are unique, and who has made his own singular contribution to our *Sampradaya*.

His writings, such as *Sri Sri Prapanna-jivanamritam*, *Prema-dhama-deva-stotram*, his commentaries on *Sharanagati*, on the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu*, and his many bhajans, songs, and *aratis* are invaluable contributions to the *Rupanuga Gaudiya Sampradaya*. And his commentary on the Gayatri mantra, which presents an understanding in the line of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* which proceeds to *Radha-dasyam*, has never been given before by any Acharyya and will be eternally appreciated by the true followers of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

We are fortunate that at an advanced age, when he expressed himself with so much maturity and compassion, we have the words of Srila Guru Maharaj expressed in so many beautiful English books, which have now been translated into many other languages. When Srila Govinda Maharaj read Srila Guru Maharaj's explanations of Mahaprabhu's *Sikshastakam*, translated from its original English into Bengali, he very much appreciated them, and remarked that Guru Maharaj had commented many important things that had not been heard by the Bengali devotees.

It is a fact that Srila Guru Maharaj has given us so many important precepts and mature spiritual understandings that are essential to our eternal development. Without those conclusions it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to view one's own development correctly or focus on what is essential for one's own growth. For that reason, we are truly fortunate that we have had an opportunity to take shelter at his lotus feet. It is our greatest fortune, and the most important occurrence in our entire life.

The entire world is fortunate that Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada has directed all humanity towards the shelter of Srila Guru Maharaj's feet, and those that have sufficient *sukriti* have taken his divine directive as their true salvation. By entrusting us to the shelter of Srila Govinda Maharaj, we can feel Srila Guru Maharaj's divine presence and concern for our eternal well-being. We can understand that Srila Guru Maharaj is eternally with us, and this will always be felt in the association of his true successor, Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswami Maharaj.

Introduction

by Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj

There are three planes of life: the plane of mundane enjoyment, the plane of renunciation, and the plane of dedication. The plane of enjoyment is where we are at presently, more or less. Mundane enjoyment means exploitation; and without exploitation, none can exist in this plane:

*ahastani sahasananam apadani catuspadam
laghuni tatra mahatma jivo jivasya jivanam*

"Those that have hands live on those who have no hands. Four-footed animals live on grass, creepers, etc. and the big live on the small."

Everything is full of life: creepers, grass, and trees also life, but without exploitation none can maintain their body here.

This is the plane of exploitation, and, as Newton's third law says, to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. By exploitation one takes a loan, and to clear that loan he will have to go down. In this way, there are so many jives (souls) going up and down, up and down due to action and reaction in the plane of exploitation. Society is trying to exploitation. Society is trying to exploit to the utmost; everywhere there is the attempt to live at the cost of others. Without it life is impossible in the area because this is the plane of exploitation. The Buddhists, the Jains, the followers of Shankara, and so many others are trying to get out of this entanglement of exploitation and to find a life where there is no exploitation, no action and reaction. To avoid action and reaction they try to find a position of renunciation, and they come to a conception similar to dreamless sleep, that of Samadhi: to withdraw completely from the objective world and to remain in the subjective plane. Without allowing their feelings to move into the lower plane, they always keep a subjective position, and that is something like dreamless sleep.

The Vaishnava section - those who serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead - are of the opinion that there is another world, the world of dedication. That dedication is just the opposite of exploitation. In the mundane plane every unit wants to exploit the environment, but in the plane of dedication, every unit wants

to serve the environment; and not only the environment, but the real key to the life of that plane is to serve the Centre. We are living in an organic whole, so every point must be true to the organic Centre. The explanation is given in Srimad-Bhagavatam by the analogy of service the root of a tree:

*yatha taror mula-nisecanena trpyanti
tat-skandha-bhujopasakhah
pranopaharac ca yathendriyanam
tatheiva sarvarhanam acyutejya
(Bha: 4.31.14)*

In the Vedic literature also, we find it said, "Try to find the one by knowing whom everything is known:"

*yasmina jnate sarvvamidam vijnatam bhavati
yasmina prapte sarvvamidam praptam bhavati
tad vijijnasasva tadeva brahma*

There is a central point by knowing which, everything is known, by attaining which everything is attained. The long and short of the entire Vedic advice is to try to find out that Centre. Therefore try to find out that Centre. In the beginning some may think this to be a ludicrous claim: "By knowing one, everything is known, by getting one, everything is got - what is this? Only a madman can say such a thing!" So an analogy is given in Srimad-Bhagavatam: when you pour water onto the root of a tree, the whole tree is fed, and if you put food into the stomach, the whole body is fed, similarly, if you do service to the Centre, everything is served. It is possible and to do that means to enter the plane of dedication. Avoiding the plane of exploitation, and also that of renunciation, try to enter the plane of dedication. Your atma, your soul proper is a member of that plane. That is the real world, whereas this is the perverted reflection.

The real world is where every unit is dedicating itself to the whole, represented by the Centre, just as in a healthy body every atom will work for the welfare of the whole body. If an atom works for itself, it exploits to the extreme, and such local works for local interest are clearly bad. Every part of the body, and every atom, is to work for the welfare of the whole system. There is a Centre, and by the guidance of that it will work.

What is the position of the Centre? It is mentioned in Bhagavad-gita, *sarvva-dharmman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja* (Bg. 18.66) Krishna explains His position: "Abandon all dharmmas (duties) and just surrender unto Me."

Now I want to express this conception from another standpoint. Hegel was a German philosopher and his philosophy is known as perfectionism. He has given an idea: the Absolute Truth, the Prime Cause of everything, must have two qualifications. What are they? It must be by itself and for itself.

By itself means that He is His own cause - nothing else created Him. If anything else created Him, that creator will have the primary importance. Therefore, to be the Absolute He must be anadi, eternally existing and not created by anything. The Absolute must have this qualification. The next qualification is that the absolute Truth is for itself. He exists for His own satisfaction, not to satisfy any other. If His existence is to satisfy another entity, then he will be secondary, and they for whose satisfaction He is living will have the prime position.

Therefore, the Absolute must have these two qualifications: He is His own cause, and He exists only to satisfy Himself, to fulfil His own purpose. The Absolute is by itself and for itself. If any straw moves, it moves to fulfil the purpose of the Absolute.

Everything - every incident, and whatever happens - must have to be for His satisfaction. So the real current is His lila, His Pastimes, but ourselves we are guided by separate interest: family interest or country interest or social interest or humanitarianism, etc. But in the infinite consideration it is all only a tiny part, and we are all engaged in acting for such separate interest. There is a clash between innumerable separate interests and so there is trouble. But we must leave all our so-called special interests, come out from misunderstanding, and try to attain the function of a unit active for the cause of the whole.

The conclusion of Bhagavad-gita given by Krishna is "*sarvva dharmman parityajya* - Give up all your duties which you think at present you have to discharge, and - *mam ekam saranam vraja* - surrender to My feet." *aham tvam sarvva-papebhyo moksayisyami ma sucah* "I shall release you from all the

troubles of which you can ever conceive."

In other words you are to remember to be faithful to the Centre. At present all your respective duties are for local interest, but give up the local identification of your own interest and merge totally in the interest of the organic whole.

We see that if a police officer takes even three rupees for his own purpose, he is punished, but if he kills so many for the interest of the country, he is rewarded. Similarly, whatever is done for the satisfaction of the whole is good, but if you do anything for yourself or any local friend, you will have to be punished. In an industry, we have no right to take a bribe for our personal purpose, at the same time we have no right to call a strike, to close down the labour force, for then the industry will be destroyed.

Neither exploitation nor renunciation will do. Exploitation is clearly bad, and because we have no right to go on strike, renunciation is also bad. In an organic whole the common interest is that everyone must be dedicated to the Centre, and to the Centre means to the whole. When we put food into the stomach, the stomach will distribute it properly to every corner according to its necessity. That sort of life is Vaisnavism. There is an organic whole, and we are a part of that. We have our special duties in connection with the whole, and that is proper dedication for the whole. We are not to put food into the eye, or into the nose, or the ear, or anywhere except the stomach, then only will it be distributed properly and the whole organism will be healthy. All of us are parts of the whole universe, and our duty is to work for the whole, and that is devotion, dedication, surrender. And how are we to know about that? We will receive help from that? We will receive help from the revealed Scriptures, and from the many saints and agents who are also coming from that plane to bring us into harmony. The religion of highest harmony has been given by Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitanyadev who explained devotion on the basis of Srimad- Bhagavatam, the book which is understood to be the real conclusion of all the revealed Scriptures. In this way He explained that energy or power is not the highest thing, but knowledge is above it. Knowledge can control power and give a beneficial result, but further, knowledge itself also holds a lower position: above it is love and affection, and that is the highest. Neither knowledge nor power, but only affection can give us fulfilment of life.

Mercy is higher than justice. Justice only exists where there is the necessity of

laws, rules, etc., but in the realm of the Absolute Autocrat, who is the Absolute Good, there can be no question of any apprehension about Him. He is Absolute Good, and Absolute Good is Absolute Love and Affection, and that is home! Back to God, back to home. What is home? It is where we find that we are in the midst of our well-wishers. If we do not care for our own benefit, then there are so many who will take care of us - in fact the whole environment will take care of us - and that is home. That is the domain of the Absolute, and we can enter into His service, the highest position, and thereby see the affection, love, harmony, and beauty that exist there. All these qualities are similar and they constitute the nature of the Prime Cause and Good, and we are to go there.

Misusing our free-will we have been somehow led astray but now we are being called, "Come home, back to God and back to home, the highest position, the land of love." This is, in general and in short, the sum total which I have presented to you - this is Krishna conception in Bhagavad-gita and in Srimad-Bhagavatam, and it is the conception that has been given by Sri Chaitanyadev. This Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math and the whole of the Gaudiya Mission is preaching only for that. "Go to the Centre, use your life for total dedication to the Centre, and the Centre is all above justice. It is all-merciful, affectionate, loving, and beautiful."

This is general background of Vaishnava religion, of Srimad Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam and a brief history of all conceptions of religion - that is, exploitation, renunciation, and dedication are the three planes of life, and the soul proper is a member of the land of dedication. All are dedicating units but somehow, by misusing their partial free-will, they have entered into the world of exploitation. Buddha, Jain, Parasanath and others have helped those who want to withdraw from here, to get out of the entanglement of exploitation - of action and reaction - by complete retirement. They have said that after retirement, the soul can live happily. Still, there may be the possibility of again becoming entangled in this trap, but where the really free souls live, all are dedicating units, and when we want to trace what is harmonising them and maintaining them in that plane we shall see that all are working for the whole, and the whole is represented by the one Absolute Good. We are to see all these things, and for this the human birth is very valuable. In connection with the sadhus - the saints, the agent - we shall try our best to get out of this entanglement and enter into the land of love, dedication, and affection.

*vimuktakilatar yair ya muktir api vimrgyate
ya krsnenatigopy asu bhajadbhyo 'pi na diyate
sa bhukti-mukti-kamatva cchuddham bhaktim akurvata
hrdaye sambhavat yesam katham bhagavati ratih*

Rati, the feeling of transcendental attraction to Krishna that is sought after by souls who have sacrificed all selfish desires, the feeling of attraction which Sri Krishna withholds in great secrecy, is not easily conferred by him even to devotees who are intensely engaged in spiritual practices. How can there be an appearance of rati in the hearts of those who do not practice unalloyed and pure bhakti because of manifold desires for elevation and salvation, or in the hearts of those who are anxious for self-destruction by way of desiring for merging in the Absolute Brahman?

- Srila Rupa Goswami, Bhaktirasamrtasindhu 1.3.42-3

(Sri Jiva Goswami, in his commentary, points out that in these verses it is explicitly stated that rati cannot appear in the hearts of aspirants for moksa, and that the signs of tears, horripilation, paleness, etc. manifest in them are not real signs of rati. The reason is that they are desirous of the fruits of devotion and salvation, and therefore it is not possible that rati in the Lord can awaken in their hearts. The defect in them is that they do not practice unalloyed bhakti, which is completely free from the tinge of fruitive karma and intellectual knowledge.)

*yatha yatha gaura padaravinde vindeta bhaktim kṛta punya-rasih
tatha tathotsarpati hr̥dy akasmatradha padambhoja sudhambhurasih*

As much as you surrender to the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga, you'll find yourself safely situated in the service of Radha-Govinda. Don't try to approach Radha-Govinda directly; if you do, there may be some difficulty. But the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga will take you there safely.

- Sri Prabhodananda Sarasvati, Chaitanya-chandramṛta, verse 88.



१

देव सिद्ध मुक्त युक्त भक्त बिन्दु वन्दितम्
 पाप ताप दाव दाह दग्ध दुःख कहन्दितम्
 कृष्ण नाम सीद्धु दहाम दहन्य दान सागरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

।

deva-siddha-mukta-yukta-bhakta-vrnda-vanditam
 pāpa-tāpa-dāva-dāha-dagdha duḥkha-khaṇḍitam
 kṛṣṇa-nāma-sīdhu-dhāma-dhanya-dāna-sāgaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The gods, perfected beings, liberated sages, mystic yogis and dedicated devotees constantly sing the glories of the holy name of our sweet Lord Sri Krishna, who has descended again into this world as Lord Chaitanya. Immersed in the glow of the golden halo and the heart-felt mood of Srimate Radharani, Lord Sri Krishna has come back again in the golden form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Like a rain cloud showering nectar the mere shadow of Lord Krishna's holy names extinguishes the blazing forest fire of insatiable desires that chain the living souls within material life, a plane of existence where souls again and again experience the agonies of birth, death and rebirth. To save souls from suffering the Lord has reappeared in the world, coming to teach us how to approach him through chanting his holy names. Sri Krishna Chaitanya is the personified form of the ocean of consciousness of the flavour of nectar which is found in the holy names of Sri Krishna.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Krishna Prema

by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami

Obeisance to the most Magnanimous, the Giver of the Love of Krishna, the Own Self of Krishna, the Lord bearing the Name Krishna-Chaitanya and possessed of

the Form of golden hue! I submit myself to Sri Krishna-Chaitanya, that merciful Person of wonderful deeds Who by the nectar of the treasure of His Own Love intoxicated the world, delirious with ignorance, by freeing it from the malady of nescience.

Lord Sri Chaitanya said:

Listen, Rupa, to the characteristics of the rasa (matured mellowness of Bhakti). I shall speak in a condensed form, for rasa is not susceptible of elaborate description since rasa can only be understood through insight and deep realisation. The ocean of the mellow of Bhakti is profound and devoid of bounding shores. I shall speak one particle of the same (Bhakti), in order to make you taste it.

In this world the number of jivas (souls) is infinite. They form the content of this world by their wanderings birth after birth through 8,400,000 different kinds of physical bodies (human bodies, animals, trees, etc.)

The specific nature of the jiva is infinitesimal in magnitude like the hundredth part of the tip of a hair. The jivas are divided into two distinct groups, viz., (1) stationary and (2) moving.

The moving jivas are again divided into those who live on the land, in water and in the air.

Mankind is a very small part of the total number of jivas that live on the land. Among men are also to be found the Mlechhas (Europeans), Pulindas, Baudhas (Oriental people), Aboriginies, etc. Among those who practice the religion of the Veda (Hindus), one half profess to follow the Veda but in fact they only follow with their lips. They commit many sins forbidden by the Veda and do not really care for that religion. Then again, among those who really act in accordance with that religion, most persons are addicted to fruitive activities. They do work (karmma) to produce fruit that they can enjoy. It is hardly possible to find even a single seeker of knowledge (jnanin) among 100,000 people working to make good karmma and there is hardly even one person who is truly Mukta (liberated) amongst 100,000 people seeking liberation.

It is hardly possible to find a single Bhakta (devotee) of Krishna among 100,000 liberated persons. The Bhakta of Krishna is free from all selfish hankerings and is, therefore, of a really peaceful and equipoised disposition (shanta), while those who desire to do work (karmma) to create enjoyment, or who desire liberation or mystic powers through yoga, are all discontented (ashanta).

It is rarely that any fortunate jiva, in the course of his wanderings in this mundane world, may obtain a chance to come to know Bhakti. That is, it is rare for someone to obtain the seed of the creeper of Bhakti, which is only found by the favour of Guru and Krishna.

Bhakti grows like a creeper growing from a tiny seed. By becoming a gardener the jiva sows the seed and splashes the seed with nourishing water, in the form of hearing the Name of Krishna and chanting the Name. The creeper of Bhakti springs to shoot and grows, piercing through this mundane sphere. The growing creeper goes through the stream of Viraja (unmanifest formless state outside this universe), then goes through the illuminated plane of Brahma (white light of Spiritual bliss), until at last the creeper finally attains for herself a home in the soil of the infinite sphere called Paravyoma. The creeper continues to grow in that Paravyoma atmosphere and reaches the limits of the higher sphere of Goloka-Vrindaban where she climbs and clings to the Purpose-Tree at the Feet of Krishna.

Prema (Divine Love), the fruit of the creeper of Bhakti, grows on the creeper only when she attains to the Feet of Krishna. All this time the gardener continues to splash the creeper with the water of hearing and chanting the Holy Name of Krishna.

At this stage there is also a second function towards the creeper, besides watering it. As the creeper begins to grow after being watered for some time, hostile animals make their appearance and tear the leaves, or the tender leaves begin to dry up because of excessive heat, etc. In these circumstances offence against the Vaishnavas (real devotees) is the entity corresponding to the vicious animals. It is such offence against the Vaishnavas that causes all those various sorts of damage, or that is to say, it is the negligence of the gardener who has failed to erect fences or to devise other protective methods to protect the creeper, and who has not given special care so that there may be no possibility for the creeper to be trampled by the mad elephant of offence to the Vaishnavas. Offence

against the Vaishnavas is identical with offence against the Holy Name - it is one of the ten categories of offences against the Holy Name.

There is yet another possible disturbance at this stage. As the creeper of Bhakti begins to grow, if there is luxuriant growth of the secondary branches then such growth also does mischief. The secondary branches are desire for enjoyment, longing for liberation, addiction to forbidden conduct, over-attention to small points of conscience, cruelty or slaughter of living things, desire of pecuniary gain and a desire for one's own worldly honour or fame. If special care is not practiced these secondary branches are apt to grow vigorously to the detriment of the principal stem of the creeper, with the result that the main stem is stunted and cannot grow. Therefore, it is the duty of the gardener to prune these secondary branches from the moment of their appearance, while one is busy with the primary task of hearing and chanting. If this is done the principal stem, continuing to grow, attains to Vrindaban, the land of Krishna.

The fruit of Prema then ripens and drops on the ground. The gardener now tastes its mellow flavour. By the help of the creeper the gardener is also enabled to reach the Purpose-Tree. The gardener can now serve in Vrindaban at the foot of the Purpose-Tree and savour the taste of the luscious juice of the fruit of Love. This Prema is the supreme desideratum, the final fruit of all activity of the soul. The four-fold objects of human endeavour namely dharma (virtue), artha (worldly possession), kama (objects of worldly desire) and moksa (liberation) are as insignificant as a straw lying by the wayside in comparison with Krishna-Prema.

The realisation of coveted powers and excellences (siddhis), or of the equable state of overflowing oneness with the bliss of Brahma-realisation (on attainment of complete withdrawal of the mind from all external efforts, as a result of practicing pious activities enjoined in the scriptures), can dazzle the imagination of a man by their glaring features. But these dazzling realisations are only dazzling until the man has savoured the smallest portion of the fragrance of the medicine of Love. Pure Love can subdue even the Lord Himself, and He is the subduer of Madhu, the great demon who is at the core of the pattern of consciousness (yantra) we perceive as the mental state of "intoxication". A person must be free from mundane intoxications which lead him to try to enjoy as a master of siddhis (siddhi-yoga) or the bliss of oneness with unmanifest Brahma (liberation) before Love can appear on the pathways of the heart.

"Bhakti is declared to be service of the Lord of the senses (God) by means of one's senses. It is free from all physical and mental elements. It is absolutely free from all mundane dirt by reason of its being entirely directed to God" - (Narada Pancharatra)

Lord Sri Chaitanya contined: As soon as the tidings of My Excellences enter the listener's ear his mind exhibits a constant inseparability from Me which is comparable to the state of a body of pure water of the Ganges on its entry into the ocean. This is the only sure characteristic of devotion which is free from all mundane tendencies. The devoted soul is inseparable from Me. The devotees never accept the gifts of residence in Vaikuntha (the unlimited realm), or the opulence and honour of a form resembling My Majestic Self, or proximity to My Presence, or complete merging in Me. All of these prospective attainments I offer to them, but they do not accept these attainments. They have no desire to have these attainments, and this is so because there is nothing covetable by them save and except My Transcendental Service.

This is Devotion that is Pure and Perfect. It is by means of such Devotion that the individual soul attains to unalloyed Love for Me, thereby transcending the limiting potency that is covering over the jiva (soul) with layers of mundane desires and feelings.

If the mind harbours the least desire either for mundane enjoyment, or for liberation from the desire for enjoyment, Love for Godhead is not aroused even by the most diligent pursuit of service according to the practices enjoined in the scriptures. So long as the ugly spectre of desire for mundane enjoyment or mundane emancipation continues to haunt the chambers of the heart, how can the bliss of devotion arise therein?

This form of Bhakti is fit to be cultured. Being duly cultured it gives rise to Rati (the natural tendency of the soul towards Krishna, or the basic principal of Love). Condensed Rati is Prema. By the process of gradual augmentation Prema becomes Sneha, Maana, Pranaya, Anuraga, Bhava and Mahabhava. A good analogy is furnished by the series of processes in the refining of raw juice of sugarcane. First there is juice, then mollasses, raw sugar, residual sugar, refined sugar, white sugar and icing sugar. These are varieties of the basic principle (Sthayibhava) in the operations of the mellow liquid (Rasa) of the Service of Krishna. If the basic principle is conjoined with higher principles known as

Vaibhava, Anubhava, Satvika and Vyabhachari then the operations of the liquid mellow of the service of Krishna exhibits the most exquisite nectarean taste. Just as the treatment of curd with sugar, ghee, pepper and camphor produces a most tasty composition.

There are five varieties of Rasa corresponding to the different types of devotees. The five varieties of Rasa are Shanta (feeling of peacefulness), Dasya (feeling that "I am a servitor of Krishna"), Sakhya (feeling that "I am a friend of Krishna"), Vatsalya (feeling that "Krishna is a child and I am Krishna's parental guardian") and Madhura (mood that "Krishna is my beloved"). There are also seven secondary types of Rasa known as Hasya (humourous mood), Adbhuta (astonishment), Veera (chivalrous mood), Karuna (compassionate mood), Raudra (angry mood), Bhayanaka (mood of awe and dread) and Vibhasta (ghastliness). The five principal kinds of Rasa are permanent and constantly permeate the mind of the devotee, whereas the seven secondary moods adventitious and are not constantly present within the mind of the devotee.

Shanta-rasa is exemplified by the conduct of the nine yogis called the Yogendras, and also in the case of the yogi Sanaka and his young brothers. Dasya-rasa, the mood of a servitor of Krishna, is seen everywhere in the case of numberless devotees of Krishna. Among the Sakhya-rasa group are the young cowherd boys who are associates of Krishna such as Sridam, as well as Krishna's cousins Bhim, Arjuna, etc. The devotees in the mood of Vatsalya-rasa includes the parents and all the older relatives of Krishna. In Madhura-rasa the principal Bhaktas (devotees) are the Milk-Maids in Vraja and also the Royal Consorts and Lakshmis whose great number baffles all calculation.

Then again Krishna-Rati is twofold, viz., (1) adulterated with the perception of His Majesty and (2) unalloyed. In the two royal cities of Mathura and Dvaraka and in the Vaikuntha worlds the mood of Divine Majesty predominates. In Gokula-Rati, love for Krishna is in a mood devoid of the consciousness of His Divine Majesty. Love exhibits shyness if the sense of Majesty becomes prominent. It is the distinctive characteristic of unalloyed Gokula-Rati that the Goddess of Devotion directing service in that realm does not pay any mind to the Majesty of Godhead, even if Majesty is manifested to Her. In Shanta-Rasa and Dasya-Rasa the realisation of Divine Majesty on rare occasions serves as a helpful excitant. In Sakhya-rasa and Madhura-Rasa it always acts as a deterrant. Krishna acted in a formal role when he met his parents Vasudeb and Devaki and

he bowed down and greeted their feet. The realisation of Divine Majesty filled the minds of both His parents with astonishment (one of the secondary Rasas - Adbhuta). Arjuna was terrified on beholding the Cosmic Form of Krishna. He craved His forgiveness for his arrogance in behaving as His chum. Rukmini was overwhelmed with fear when Krishna told her jokingly that He would leave her.

But the Source of Unalloyed Love knows nothing of Divine Majesty. If She meets with any exhibition of Majesty, She simply ignores all relationship on Her part with such Entity.

In Shanta-Rasa there is found exclusive attachment to Krishna due to the realisation of one's spiritual nature. Krishna Himself says, "Equinamity (Sama) results from the inclination of constant attachment to Me". The specific effect of Shanta-Rasa is noticeable in this, that the Shanta-devotee discards every other longing except for Krishna. Hence no one can have real equanimity of disposition except the devotee of Krishna. The devotee of Krishna regards paradise and liberation as hell. The two characteristics of the Shanta-devotee are constant attachment to Krishna and renunciation of all other longing. These two characteristics permeate all the devotes of Krishna just as sound permeates and penetrates all mundane elements.

It is the nature of the Shanta-devotee to be devoid of any personal tie of love with Krishna. In the heart of the peaceful Shanta-devotee, the realisation of Krishna as the Supremely Great Being (Para-Brahma) and the Supreme Soul (Paramaatman) is strong. In Shanta-Rasa there is only the realisation of the spiritual nature of one's relationship with Krishna; whereas in Dasya-Rasa there is the greater realisation of the Nature of Krishna as the Master possessing Full Divine Majesty. In Dasya (service of the Master) mood there is exuberance of the realisation of God as the Possessor of controlling power and great dignity. The servitor by his humble ministration gives constant pleasure to Krishna.

In Dasya (servitor mood) there are the two characteristics of Shanta with the further addition of the specific activity of servitude; therefore, Dasya possesses this two-fold quality. In Sakhya (friendship) there are the qualities of both Santa and Dasya, but whereas in the Dasya mood the servitude is full of the sense of inferiority and high respect for Krishna, in Sakhya (friendship) it is characterised by full confidence. The chums of Krishna climb to His shoulders, make Him climb theirs, engage in the sport of wrestling with Him, serve Krishna and make

Krishna serve them in His turn. Sakhya is marked by the predominance of confidential relations devoid of the sense of respect and of one's inferiority to Him. Hence Sakhya-Rasa possesses the three-fold quality. There is a greater measure of the personal sentiment, a sense of regarding Krishna as one's own. It is this last trait that makes Godhead submit to Sakhya-Rasa, as for instance when Krishna agreed to drive the chariot of His cousin Arjuna when Arjuna was fighting on the battlefield at Kurukshetra.

In Vatsalya-Rasa (Parental mood of Devotion) there are the qualities of Shanta and the ministration of Dasya. There are also the qualities of Sakhya consisting of the absence of restraint, and of awe and respect, as well as an absence of fear of punishment and scolding - which is due to the sentiment of kinship. Additionally, there are the activities bearing the designation of "tending" (palana). There is the sentiment of regarding oneself as the guardian of Krishna, Who is regarded as the Ward. By this fourfold characteristic Vatsalya-Rasa is as delicious as nectar. Krishna Himself is immersed in that nectarean bliss in the company of His devotee. Those jnanins (meditators) such as Suka, Sanaka and Sanatan who are aware of the Nature of Krishna as Divinity possessed of controlling Power, declare that Krishna also possesses the quality of subservience to His devotee.

In Madhura-Rasa there is constant attachment to Krishna, extreme servitude, the absence of diffidence of the chum, the increased sentiment for Krishna that is felt when one is tending one's Child, and finally serving Krishna by means of one's own body as Consort. Hence Madhura-Rasa exhibits five distinct qualities. An analogy is supplied by the case of the five mundane elements (space, air, fire, water, earth). The quality of each element commencing with space (akasha) is carried to the next in the series and added to its own distinctive quality till the last of the elements, viz., the earth, is generated and seen to be possessing the distinctive qualities of the preceding four elements in addition to its own specific qualities. In the same manner, all the Bhavas combine in Madhura. For this reason, Madhura-Rasa has greater tastefulness which makes it so exquisitely delicious.

The Lord said to Sri Rupa Goswami that He had given him the mere outline of Bhakti-Rasa. Sri Chaitanya advised Sri Rupa Goswami to ponder this and to amplify and expand upon it in his writings. It is by the practice of constant meditation that Krishna manifests Himself to the heart. By the Grace of Krishna even an ignorant person is enabled to realise the nature of the Ocean of Rasa.

२

स्वर्न कोति दर्पनाब्ध देह वर्न गौरवम्
 पद्म पारिजात गन्ध वन्दितान्ग सौरभम्
 कोति काम मूर्च्छितान्ग्रि रूप रास रत्नरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

2

svaṛṇa-koṭi-darpaṇābha-deha-varṇa-gauravam
 padma-pārijāta-gandha-vanditāṅga-saurabham
 koṭi-kāma-mūrcchitāṅghri-rūpa-rāsa-rangaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord's lustrous form surpasses the brilliance of a million mirrors of gold. The fragrance of heavenly and earthly lotus flowers is humbled by the subtle scent of nectar filling the air around Lord Sri Gaurasundara. Millions of cupids are stunned by his infinite beauty. Cupid's capacity to charm and create rapture is surpassed by the infinite attractiveness of the Lord. Sri Gaurasundara's dancing in various moods of rapture and love makes everyone seeing him swoon. Dancing in the deepest bliss of spiritual love, Sri Gaurasundara is the artful dancer Sri Krishna himself, come again to this Earth in a golden form.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Sri Chaitanya Bhagavat

(Adi-lila, Chapter 2)

by Sri Vrindavan Das Thakur

Sri Gauranga's beautifully brilliant luster overshadows the sun's shining rays and dazzled my eyes. The beauty of His long, slightly drooping eyes, curved like the petals of a lotus, cannot be adequately described in words.

His form is eternal. His exquisite complexion is of the color of sandalwood paste. His wide chest is decorated with a gently swaying wild-flower garland and His luminous, moon-like face is pleasing, cooling and comforting to see. The Lord's long arms reach down to His knees.

Sounds of victory and praise reverberated in all directions when the Lord came into this world to inaugurate the congregational chanting of the Holy Names. The earth goddess felt especially blessed at the advent of Lord Gauranga. The gods in the heavens sang in great joy and danced in ecstasy.

The Golden moon Sri Chaitanya had arisen and sounds of great joy filled the air in all directions. His beauty humbled the beauty of a million Cupids. Meditating on His own beauty He smiled when contemplating His own dancing and singing.

His lovely face and charming eyes were stunning to see, as was said in the Veda in the descriptions of the beauty of the incarnations of God. His feet were marked with the signs of flag, lightning etc, just like Lord Krishna's feet. His entire exquisite form was decorated with features to enchant the minds of everyone.

All fear and despondency was dissipated and the world was showered with immense fortune when the Lord came into the world and showed His divine form.

३

प्रेम नाम दान जन्य पन्च तत्त्वकात्मकम्
 सान्ना दिव्य पार्शदास्त्र वैष्णवावतारकम्
 श्याम गौर नाम गान त्रित्य मत्त नागरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

3

prema-nāma-dāna-janya-pañca-tattvakātmakam
 sānga-divya-pārsadāstra-vaibhavāvatāarakam
 śyāma-gaura-nāma-gāna-nṛtya-matta-nāgaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord revealed himself in the world in a five-aspect form (panca-tattva) for the purpose of revealing the variegated beauties of his holy name, which is non-different from himself. Sri Krishna revealed himself in these five aspects: Sri Krishna Chaitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhar and Srivas Thakur.

Sri Krishna Chaitanya is Krishna himself, outwardly acting like a devotee. Prabhu Nityananda is his other self and elder brother. Sri Advaita Acharya is the avatara who establishes the true religion for the age of Kali (yuga dharma). Gadadhar Pandit is the Lord's intimate associate who accompanies Sri Gaurasundara as he enjoys contemplating the beauty of pure spiritual love. And Srivas Pandit is foremost amongst the Lord's general associates who come with him whenever he appears.

In other ages when the Lord descends to Earth he comes with weapons such as the discus and mace which He uses to kill demons. But in this age of Kali (kali-yuga) when almost every person is possessed by the ghosts of lust, anger and violence, the Lord comes with the weapon of the holy name to destroy every kind of evil. Armed with the weapon of the holy name the Lord wandered through the streets and marketplaces of Nadia district, just like an ordinary resident of that place.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita, Adi Lila Chapter Seven
 by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami
 (translation by Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj)

Let me first offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is the ultimate goal of life for one bereft of all possessions in this material world and is the only meaning for one advancing in spiritual life. Thus let me write about His magnanimous contribution of devotional service in love of God. Let me offer glorification to the Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. One who has taken shelter of His lotus feet is the most glorified person.

In the beginning I have discussed the truth about the spiritual master. Now I shall try to explain the Panca-tattva. These five tattvas incarnate with Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and thus the Lord executes His sankirtana movement with great pleasure. Spiritually there are no differences between these five tattvas, for on the transcendental platform everything is absolute. Yet there are also varieties in the spiritual world, and in order to taste these spiritual varieties one should distinguish between them.

Let me offer my obeisances unto Lord Sri Krishna, who has manifested Himself in five as a devotee, expansion of a devotee, incarnation of a devotee, pure devotee and devotional energy. Krishna, the reservoir of all pleasure, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, the supreme controller. No one is greater than or equal to Sri Krishna, yet He appears as the son of Maharaja Nanda. Lord Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the supreme enjoyer in the rasa dance. He is the leader of the damsels of Vraja, and all others are simply His associates. The selfsame Lord Krishna advented Himself as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu with all His eternal associates, who are also equally glorious. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is the supreme controller, the one Personality of Godhead, has ecstatically become a devotee, yet His body is transcendental and not materially tinged. The transcendental mellow of conjugal love of Krishna is so wonderful that Krishna Himself accepts the form of a devotee to relish and taste it fully.

For this reason Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the supreme teacher, accepts the form of a devotee and accepts Lord Nityananda as His elder brother. Sri Advaita Acarya is Lord Chaitanya's incarnation as a devotee. Therefore these three tattvas [Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and Advaita Gosani] are the predominators, or masters.

One of Them is Mahaprabhu, and the other two are prabhus. These two prabhus serve the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu. The three predominators [Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and Advaita Prabhu] are worshipable by all living entities, and the fourth principle [Sri Gadadhara Prabhu] is to be understood as Their worshiper. There are innumerable pure devotees of the Lord, headed by Srivasa Thakura, who are known as unalloyed devotees.

The devotees headed by Gadadhara Pandita are to be considered incarnations of the internal potency of the Lord. They are confidential devotees engaged in the service of the Lord. The internal devotees or potencies are all eternal associates in the pastimes of the Lord. Only with them does the Lord advent to propound the sankirtana movement, only with them does the Lord taste the mellow of conjugal love, and only with them does He distribute this love of God to people in general.

The characteristics of Krishna are understood to be a storehouse of transcendental love. Although that storehouse of love certainly came with Krishna when He was present, it was sealed. But when Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came with His other associates of the Panca-tattva, they broke the seal and plundered the storehouse to taste transcendental love of Krishna. The more they tasted it, the more their thirst for it grew. Sri Panca-tattva themselves danced again and again and thus made it easier to drink nectarean love of Godhead. They danced, cried, laughed and chanted like madmen, and in this way they distributed love of Godhead.

In distributing love of Godhead, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates did not consider who was a fit candidate and who was not, nor where such distribution should or should not take place. They made no conditions. Wherever they got the opportunity the members of the Panca-tattva distributed love of Godhead. Although the members of the Panca-tattva plundered the storehouse of love of Godhead and ate and distributed its contents, there was no scarcity, for this wonderful storehouse is so complete that as the love is distributed, the supply

increases hundreds of times. The flood of love of Godhead swelled in all directions, and thus young men, old men, women and children were all immersed in that inundation. The Krishna consciousness movement will inundate the entire world and drown everyone, whether one be a gentleman, a rogue or even lame, invalid or blind.

When the five members of the Panca-tattva saw the entire world drowned in love of Godhead and the seed of material enjoyment in the living entities completely destroyed, they all became exceedingly happy. The more the five members of the Panca-tattva cause the rains of love of Godhead to fall, the more the inundation increases and spreads all over the world.

४

शान्तिं पुर्यदहीश कल्प् अदहम्म दुहक्क दुहसहम्
 जीव दुहक्क हानं भक्त सौक्ख्यदान विग्रहम्
 कल्प् अग्हौह नाशं किश्हं नाम सीद्धु सन्चरम्
 प्रेमं दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

4

śānti-puryadhīśa-kaly-adharmma-duḥkha-duḥsaham
 jīva-duḥkha-hāna-bhakta-saukhyadāna-vigraham
 kaly-aghauha-nāśa-kṛṣṇa-nāma-sīdhu-sañcaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Advaita Acharya, the avatara of Maha-Vishnu, came into the world to establish true religion. Seeing the intense illusion and suffering of the living beings in this mortal world he felt intense grief. Advaita Acharya worshipped Lord Vaikunthapati Vishnu. He called to Lord Vaikunthapati and asked him to appear on Earth to show kindness to worldly people by distributing Krishna consciousness. This Krishna consciousness dispels all misconception and awakens divine knowledge within the soul. This Krishna consciousness is the true remedy for all kinds of suffering. Appearing in the world in his Deity form of Sri Gaurasundara, Krishna came and took away the pains suffered by the living beings. He pacified the grief of Advaita Acharya by widely distributing the nectar of his holy names.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Appearance of Sri Gaurasundar by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

Within the sacred land of India, the holy footprints of the Lord and His devotees are a place of pilgrimage for the whole world. The seven auspicious places in India which are said to award liberation, are all found within those footprints. Among those holy places is Sri Mayapur which is situated in Sri Nabadwip Dham. It is non-different from Mathura mandal. Srila Vrindavana das Thakura has written, "There is no other village in the world like Sri Nabadwip, where

Lord Chaitanya Gosai has descended". Truly Sri Nabadwip Dham is the best of all, and there is no other place like it, since the most magnanimous mercy-personified Sri Gaura Hari appeared in this part of the world. He indiscriminately distributed to all persons, whether they were qualified or unqualified, the highest perfection of love of God which is difficult for even the demigods to obtain. He has so generously distributed this highest gift even to the most fallen. Therefore Sri Nabadwip is incomparable in the world.

Nearly 500 years ago Sri Nabadwip city was renowned throughout the world as the center of learning and knowledge. The science of logic which was brought from Mithila, was cultured by the intelligentsia of Sri Nabadwip, and its fame was spread all over the world. From Benares in Northern India, and from many other places sannyasis and the class of professors who were well read in Nyaya and Vedanta all came to Nabadwip for learning. From Kanchi in Southern India, and other places too, many students desirous of becoming well educated, all came to Sri Nabadwip.

"Persons from different places all go to Nabadwip, for one who studies in Nabadwip he gets the taste for knowledge. No wonder there were hundreds of thousands of students and professors there".

- Chaitanya Bhagawat.

Truly speaking, "Even a boy can argue with a Bhattacharya," if he studied at Nabadwip. Everyone considered himself a great scholar if he studied there. And there was no chance of getting recognition from the scholarly community if one did not study or teach in Sri Nabadwip.

Nabadwip was noted for its opulence which, by the grace of Sri Lakshmidēvi, were shared by all the people there. On one bank of the Ganges, the greatest place of all learning, the most sacred Sri Mayapur was situated. Many wealthy persons from different parts of the world all came to settle there. Sri Ia Vrindavana das Thakura writes "Who can describe the opulence of Sri Nabadwip? Thousands of people go to take bath there, because Lakshmidēvi glances over that place. Everyone lives there in great happiness. The Lord, knowing He would appear there, had arranged everything very nicely for His descent". The whole atmosphere was surcharged with auspiciousness, with many wealthy and learned persons coming from distant places to reside there in that holy place of

pilgrimage and seat of learning. There is no need in mentioning the glories associated with such a place.

But the pain within the hearts of the pure devotees knew no bounds. In the midst of all this grandeur and beauty they could see that everyone was simply wasting their valuable time in pursuing materialistic objectives. Seeing this how could they be happy? Everyone was simply mad for wealth, mad for physical beauty, mad for acquiring followers, mad for knowledge and intoxicated with the empiric speculations of materialistic science. Their mad attempt for profit, adoration and distinction looked like a frenzied dance, and in the midst of such things the devotees were perplexed. How to save them? Running madly after the flickering happiness of this world, the conditioned soul judges everything from the point of view of sense gratification, and uselessly waste their time with futile talks within that plane of existence. These things are all intolerable for the devotees. SriIa Vrindavana das Thakura writes, "The whole world is devoid of real love for Ram and Krishna. As was predicted in the scriptures for Kali yuga, people only know about ritualistic ceremonies. They stay up the whole night singing the glories of some demigod.

Some of them proudly worship Visahari, who removes the effect of snake poison. Others set up idols and worship them with great wealth. They spend money lavishly on their sons and daughters. Like this, everyone simply wastes their time. They never care to engage in Krishna kirtan which is the yuga dharma, or only religious practice for this age. They prefer to speak ill of others rather than say good things about them. Even from those who are puffed up with their detachment and renunciation, we never hear the chanting of the holy names from their lips. Some others think that the time of bathing is the only auspicious moment for chanting the names Govinda and Pundarikaksha. Those who recite the Bhagavatam for the education of the people, do not have the devotional serving mood in their tongue. Thus the Lord's energy produces the worldly illusion. This causes the devotee's unhappiness to increase without limit. Seeing the whole world devoid of Krishna bhakti their hearts are burning within. Some of them feel such intense pain that they want to leave their bodies. Others simply sigh and produce the name Krishna in their exhaling. Their food no longer tastes good in their mouths. When they see the activities of this material world they become exceedingly unhappy".

Sri Advaita Acharya was glorified by everyone, even among the society of non-devotees as he was representative of all the vaisnavas. Sri Advaita Prabhu was residing in Mayapur and for the welfare of the world was engaged in worshipping the Lord and preaching His glories. The miserable condition of the living entities who were all forgetful of Krishna was giving pain to his heart. He would arrange daily meetings for the devotees at which they would all express grief and profusely shed tears over the dreadful world situation. The Acharya, who was an ocean of mercy, found the miserable condition of the living entities to be unbearable and He decided resolutely within himself, that He would call the Lord, Himself, to descend and save the situation. "I will meet Vaikunthanath and bring Him here. Dancing and singing I will deliver all living entities". The glories of Advaita Acharya were not unknown to the devotees. All were pleased by hearing the promise of Advaita Acharya and they all engaged in His service having full faith in Him.

With this promise fixed in His mind, Sri Advaita Acharya meditated on offering Ganges water and Tulasi leaf to the Lord constantly calling to Goloka Behari again and again. The Lord's throne was shaking. The devotees, who were also engaged in calling the Lord, abstained from all comforts and material enjoyment, and to relieve the devotee's unhappiness the all merciful Lord prepared to descend to this world. Of course when the Lord descends He comes with all His paraphernalia and associates, therefore before the Lord's descent the all auspicious Nityananda Prabhu, who appeared in Radha desa, came first to make all the necessary preparations to receive the Lord

Sri Mayapur is the center of Nabadwip Dham and is called Antardwip. Sri Jagannath Mishra lived at this place, Antardwip. He was a vastly learned and generous person and the resort of the purest souls. Srila Vrindavana das Thakura has written,

“Nabadwip is the place of residence of Jagannath Mishra. He was as devoted to his religious duties as Vasudeva, Himself. His magnanimous character was as unlimited as Brahman. No one could compare with him. Formerly he was Kasyapa, Dasaratha, Vasudeva and Nanda Maharaja, and now, as Jagannath Mishra, was the combination of them all. His wife, named Sachidevi, was completely devoted to her husband. She was the emblem of Krishna bhakti and the mother of the whole world”.

This very pure, divine couple tragically lost eight daughters, but after that they begot a son named Visvarupa who had uncommonly beautiful features. They always worshipped the Lord in great transcendental ecstasy. Day by day Visvarupa, who always satisfied his father and mother, grew like the bright half of the waxing moon. This dark world got the strength of the auspicious planets. In 1406 Saka there was a special day because Sri Jagannath Mishra saw a brilliant transcendental ray make its way into his heart, and again from his heart it entered into the heart of Sri Sachidevi. Feeling thrilled, Mishra was overwhelmed with joy, and from that day Sachidevi became transformed into a wonderful embodiment of that transcendental ray. Mishra told Sachidevi all these things he had observed, and when Sachidevi confirmed that she had also experienced the same things, it only caused Mishradev to increase his wonder. “I see in the sky as if many heavenly beings are making hymns in praise of me. The whole atmosphere has become delightful with many enlightened persons coming and going from this place”. Noticing all these things, Mishra said with joy, “From these things I can understand that a great personality will be born.” With great attention this divine couple was always performing Visnu worship.

On 1407 Sakabda, Phalgun, full moon day, at evening time, the Lord Sri Gaurachandra was born. On this pleasant spring evening, the day of the full moon, there was also a lunar eclipse. The banks of the Ganges and the roads of the city leading to the Ganges were all filled with throngs of people - a very thick crowd - and all were struggling along the way. Seeing this great crowd of people, one felt as if the whole universe had come here leaving the rest of the fourteen worlds vacant. Everyone was filled with ecstatic bliss. The sound of Hari filled up and resounded throughout the fourteen worlds. It was as if all the auspicious signs of the universe were rising at the same time, the splendor of Nabadwip was so brilliant. An unprecedented vibration of the name of Hari resounded from the many devotees gathered on the bank of the Ganges. The flood of Harinam made

all inauspicious signs disappear on this occasion of the lunar eclipse, and instead brought boundless joy to everyone. As they stood on the banks of the Ganges, everyone was thinking, "Where did so many people come from? Previously there were so many eclipses, but so many persons, and such a great vibration of the sound of Hari, we have never seen or heard any thing like this before, and we are all overwhelmed with joy! They were all filled with intense happiness but they could not understand the cause. This was going on, and all without exception were feeling very good. Even fallen persons were laughing in the company of the Hindus, relishing the chanting of Hari, Hari. There was pleasure in all ten directions, and even the river water was feeling pleased.

It was a very favorable evening indeed, "Lion rashi, Lion lagna, highly placed planets, the six planets, the eight signs - all auspiciousness was visible everywhere." Everyone was well dressed and decorated for the Lord's appearance and singing songs. "At that time the life of the whole world, Sri Sachinandana, appeared".

In Sri Jagannath Mishra's house, there was no limit to the joyful atmosphere found in Sri Sachidevi's room. The whole world was inundated by the flood of Harinam, as the spotless full moon appeared today. And that is why the moon in the sky covered his face out of shyness (in the lunar eclipse). Why shouldn't he cover his face? The moons on his toenails give such a brilliant, merciful light that they outshine millions of moons, and it is that same Gaurachandra who appeared today. Everywhere, on all sides flowers were raining from the sky. The sounds of millions of conch shells, beating drums, and dancing of divine personalities all began at that time. The whole earth resounded with "Jaya Jaya," and the entire universe became liberated. The news of the appearance of Gaura Hari was thus announced. The devotees directly felt within themselves full satisfaction. The sweet sounds of the conch, bells, mridanga, and kartals became sweeter still when mixed with the chorus of, "Jaya Sachinandana, Jaya Gaura Hari."

Everything connected with Gaura Hari is eternal. His name, form, qualities, pastimes, associates, paraphernalia, etc. are all eternal. His appearance is eternal. For those fortunate persons who are pure in heart, the eternal Lord resides in their hearts always. These things can not be understood by our tiny brains. So the Lord is acintya bheda bheda appearing in the form of Acharyadev as the highest conclusion of this principle. Only by the grace of sadhu and guru are we able to know the glory of Sri Chaitanyadeva who is the eternally pure, fully liberated

Ultimate Reality. At that time, those fortunate persons who have received the mercy of the sadhus can understand that Gaurachandra appears as Sri Krishna in the mood of Radharani. They feel great ecstasy within their hearts and they are able to understand, "Today also Gaurangaraya was performing His pastimes and only a few fortunate persons were able to see"

*adyapiha sei lila kare gauraya
kona kona bhagyavan dehipara paya
anarpita-carim carat karunayavatirnah kalau
samarpayitam unnatojvala rasam sva bhakti sriijyam
harih purata sundara dyuti kadamba sandipitah
sada hridaya kandare sphuratu vah sachinandana*

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Sacidevi, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime radiant spiritual knowledge of the mellow taste of His service.

५

द्वीप नव्य गान्ना बन्ना जन्म कर्म दर्शितम्
 श्रीनिवास वास दहन्य नाम रास हर्षितम्
 श्री हरिप्रियेश पूज्यद्दही शची पुरन्दरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

5

dvīpa-navya-gāṅga-baṅga-janma-karma-darśitam
 śrīnivāsa-vāsa-dhanya-nāma-rāsa-harṣitam
 śrī-haripriyeśa-pūjyadhī-śacī-purandaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Gauranga appeared in the sacred place known as Sri Nabadwip Dham, the spiritual city of nine islands situated within the eternal stream of the Ganges river. Sri Nabadwip Dham is non-different from Svetadwipa, the blissful island of Srīman Narayana, the Lord and compassionate guardian of all beings. In his golden manifestation of Sri Gauranga the Lord engaged in the play of congregational chanting of the names of Sri Krishna (nama-sankirtan). He filled the hearts of everyone with the bliss of the holy name. Bringing his eternal family to Earth with him, his mother and father, brother and others, the Lord blessed the home of Srīvas Pandit with his divine presence. In the home of Srīvas, Sri Gauranga showed many wonderful revelations to the devotees. Sri Gaurasundara is the controlling life-force of his consorts Lakṣmīpriya-devī and Viṣṇupriya-devī and his mind was filled with deep affection for his mother and father, Sacīdevī and Jagannātha Mishra.

I fall down at the feet of Sri Gaurahari, radiant as the golden moon in the season of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Sacinandana-vandana

by Srīla Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj

*jay sacinandana sura-muni-vandana, bhava-bhaya-khandana jayo he
 jay hari-kirtana narīttana varttana, kalimāla-karttana jayo he*

All glories to Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the son of Sacīdevī. Great sages and demigods always sing His praise, for by doing so, the fear of repeated

birth and death is cut to pieces. All glories to the kirttan of the Holy Name of Krishna, for when one chants the Holy Name of Krishna and dances in ecstasy, the filth of this iron age of Kali disappears.

*nayana-purandara visvarupa snehadhara, visvambhara visvera kalyana
jay laksmi-visnupriya visvambhara priyahiya, jaya priya kinkara isana*

Sri Chaitanya delights all eyes with His charming beauty. He is the most dearly beloved Lord of all and the intimate brother of Visvarup. He brings the highest auspiciousness to everyone, for He floods the entire universe with the nectar of love of Godhead and thus saves all living beings. All glories to Laksmipriya and Visnupriya Devi, who are very dear to Sri Nimai Pandit. All glories to their family servant, Isana.

*sri sita-advaita-ray malini-srivasa jay, jay candrasekhara acaryya
jay nityananda ray gadadhara jay jay, jaya haridasa namacaryya*

All glories to Sita Thakurani and Sri Advaita Acharyya, all glories to Malini-devi and Srivasa Thakura, and all glories to Acharyya Chandrasekhara. All glories to Srila Nityananda Prabhu, Gadadhara Pandit and Haridasa Thakura, the Namacaryyas.

*murari mukunda jay premanidhi mahasaya, jaya jata prabhu parisad
vandi savakara paya adhamere krpa hoy, bhakti saparsada-prabhupad*

All glories to Murari Gupta, and all glories to Mukunda Datta. All glories to all the other eternal associates of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. By singing the glories of Srila Prabhupada all those great souls who are eternal associates of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, even the lowest of men can obtain the highest treasure of love.

६

श्री शची दुलाल बाल्य बाल सना चन्चलम्
 आकुमार सर्व्व शास्त्र दक्षह तर्क मनालम्
 छात्र सना रना दिग्जिगीशु दर्प समहरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

6

śrī-śacī-dulāla-bālya-bāla-sanga-cañcalam
 ākumāra-sarvva-śāstra-dakṣa-tarka-mangalam
 chāṭtra-sanga-ranga-digjigīṣu-darpa-samharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The young son of Sachidevi, Sri Gaurasundara, enjoyed mischief-making with other naughty boys, just as he had enjoyed making mischief in the previous age when he appeared as Krishna, the son of Yashoda. These childhood pastimes were enjoyable not only for the Lord and his young friends but also for the adults witnessing his games and merry-making. In his adolescence Sri Gaurasundara was recognised as a prodigy in matters of logic and debate. He was known as Nimai Pandit or Sachinandana Gaurahari, the son of Sachi and Jagannatha Mishra. Sri Gaurasundara used the skills of a logician to teach that the doctrine of pure devotion is the last word in philosophic thought. On the banks of the Ganges at Sri Nabadwip Dham, Nimai Pandit met the most learned scholar of Sanskrit of all times, Digvijayi Pandit, and defeated the pandit in a debate. Digvijayi Pandit was amazed to find this boy Nimai Pandit could remember everything he had heard or read only once. Digvijayi Pandit was lost for words to counter the logic and arguments of Sri Nimai Pandit. The students witnessing the debate began to laugh at Digvijayi Pandit but gentle-hearted Nimai told the boys to be silent and not show disrespect. Then playful Nimai deconstructed his own arguments and stated that the original arguments the Pandit had put forward were correct. Digvijayi Pandit was utterly awestruck to see the depth of the boy's intelligence. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Philosophy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

There are many schools of atheist philosophers. The most famous atheist in Indian philosophy was Charvak Muni. His philosophy is paralleled by the extreme atheists of Western philosophy. According to their opinion, consciousness is the by-product of the chemical combinations of different material substances. With the dissolution of this physical body, neither soul nor consciousness remains. Only the physical combinations of the different elements of the body remain. Just as the combinations of different chemicals produces something more than the individual chemicals themselves, the physical combination of different material elements produce consciousness. With the dissolution of this fleshy body, nothing remains. This philosophy was first propounded in the West by Epicurus.

Then comes the Buddhist school of philosophy. They say that when the physical body is dissolved the subtle body - the mental system - goes on to take another birth. The Buddhists admit transmigration from one body to the next, or reincarnation. According to them, although this body may vanish, we must enter another body according to our karma. If we work in a particular way, then the subtle body - the mental system - dissolves, and nothing remains. There is only the void called Nirvana. According to the Buddhists, there is no soul.

Shankaracharya's philosophy is similar - with a slight difference. The Buddhist school says that the individual soul does not exist. According to them there is no permanent individual soul. Shankara also said that no permanent individual soul exists, but Shankara says that conscious substance (Brahman) exists as the ultimate reality. This is the difference between Shankara and the Buddhists. According to Shankara, consciousness itself is true, it is only the consciousness of separate existence that is false. In his view, with the dissolution of the mental system no individual soul remains. The individual soul is only a reflection of the conscious substance which is the ultimate reality (Brahman). With the dissolution of the mental system, each soul's consciousness of individuality vanishes - it is non-existent in the ultimate plane of reality.

According to Shankara, the ultimate reality is conscious substance: Brahman. The example is given of the moon and its reflection in a mirror. Remove the mirror

and there is no reflection. His view is that all individual souls are reflections from the common source: Brahman, or consciousness. So, Shankara says, in reality individual souls are one and the same with Brahman.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's interpretation of Vedanta is different from Shankaracharya's. Sri Chaitanya says that we have to accept the Vedic truth in its entirety, without any modification. Shankaracharya has accepted only a few Vedic aphorisms according to his own choice. And even that is a partial representation and not the whole truth. For example, his four principle expressions from the Vedas are *aham brahmasmi*: "I am Brahman;" *tattvam asi*: "thou art that;" *so'ham*: "I am that;" and *sarvam khalv idam brahma*: "everything is Brahman."

Sri Chaitanya analysed the meaning of the aphorism *sarvam khalv idam brahma* (everything is Brahman) as follows: "According to Shankaracarya, everything is one. He says *brahma satyam jagan mithya*: 'Spirit is true, the world is false.' Shankaracharya says that Brahman (spirit) exists, and that *sarva* (everything) does not exist. If this is actually true, and everything is one, then why does the question of existence or non-existence arise at all? In the aphorism *sarva khalv idam brahma*, *sarva* (everything is Brahman) "everything" exists and *brahma* or "spirit" also exists. In this expression, "many" exists and "one" also exists. There is many and there is one. Again, if everything is one, then the question arises, "to whom are we speaking?" "For whom have the Vedas come with this advice?" Both the relative and the Absolute exist together; they are coexistent.

The absolute and the relative are also represented in the Vedantic aphorism *tat tvam asi*: "Thou art that. *Tat* or "that" is there and *tvam* "you" is also there. Both variety and unity are found represented in the aphorism *tat tvam asi*. But Shankaracharya accepts one and rejects the other. His explanation is therefore a misinterpretation of the original meaning of the Vedanta. It is not a proper interpretation of the Vedas, because he has thrust his own idea or conception forward in the name of the Vedanta. Shankaracharya's interpretation of Vedanta is artificial. It is selfish and provincial.

This is the refutation of Shankaracharya given by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and, as far as we are concerned, it cannot be seen otherwise. If we try to follow the interpretation of Shankaracharya, then what meaning can be found in this statement of the Upanishads:

yato va imani bhutani jayante yena jatani jivanti

The Absolute Truth is He from whom everything is coming, who is maintaining everything and within whom everything exists, into whom everything enters at the time of annihilation.

What does this statement of the Upanishads mean? It is sufficient for our understanding to accept the direct meaning: Is not the self-explanatory meaning of these words sufficient to understand this simple statement of the Upanishads? Is it not specific? Does this statement say that the Absolute Truth is non-differentiated? How it can be?

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu defeats Shankaracharya through common sense. The unique characteristic of his argument is that he refutes opposing views through common sense. He defeats his philosophical opponents not with abstract, difficult, and intellectual arguments but with common sense.

When Sri Chaitanya wanted to demonstrate with common sense the supremacy of Narayana over Shiva, he said that one may just consider the position of the Ganges. The Ganges is the water that washes the feet of Narayana, and yet she rests on the head of Shiva. From this, we can easily use common sense to see which of the two holds the superior position. When Sri Chaitanya wanted to show that Krishna is greater than Narayana, he pointed out that we may take the example of Lakshmidēvi. Lakshmidēvi aspires after the association of Krishna. Although she has everything she might need with Narayana, still she has some aspiration for the company of Krishna. On the other hand, when the gopis meet Narayana, they pray that their devotion to Krishna may be enhanced by His grace. They have no attraction for Narayana.

In this way, by applying our common sense, our intuition, one may judge the nature of reality. Intuition will be far more helpful than abstruse argument. Vedanta confirms this in the aphorism *tarka pratishtanat*: "Argument can never help us reach any real conclusion." Rather it is only intuition and common sense that can really help us. This is the recommendation of Sri Chaitanya, and this is how he refuted many scholars, including even the great all-conquering Digvijaya Pandit of Kashmir.

७

वर्ज्य पात्र सारमेय सर्प सना वहेलनम्
 स्कन्दह वाहि चौर तीर्त्ह विप्र चित्र लीलनम्
 क्रिश्ण नाम मात्र बाल्य कोप शान्ति सौकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

7

varjya-pātra-sārameya-sarpa-sanga-khelanam
 skandha-vāhi-caura-tīrtha-vipra-citra-līlanam
 kṛṣṇa-nāma-mātra-bālya-kopa-śānti-saukaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord's childhood pastimes were most wonderful. As an infant, he was once found playing on top of a heap of disused cooking pots. When his mother told him to leave that unclean place the infant Nimai refused to do so and presented his own clever reasoning and logic to assert his own wish to stay there and play. He played with unclean animals such as puppies and snakes. He once lay down on a cobra as if it were a bed. Then one day two thieves kidnapped Nimai. One of the thieves lifted the child onto his shoulder and took him away with the intention of stealing his ornaments. But when the two thieves were running along a jungle path they found the path had mysteriously brought them back to the child's home. The thieves left Nimai and fled in fear. Another day, a visiting brahmin cooked some food and offered it to the Deity of Krishna in the house of Sri Gaurasundara. The brahmin suddenly found the child Nimai was eating the offering. The brahmin was upset that his offering had been polluted but then Sri Gaurasundara transformed into Krishna and revealed that he is Krishna himself, the very Deity the brahmin had been worshipping.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Vraja and Nabadwip

by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur

The devotees who are imbued with all-love and who walk in the footsteps of the spiritual maids of Vraja, alone attain to the realm of Goloka. The different locations of the devotees in Goloka according to the respective differences in the

nature of their rasa, i.e., mellow quality, are settled by the inconceivable power of Krishna. The pure devotees following the devotees of Vraja and those following the pure devotees of Nabadwip are located in the realm of Krishna and Gaura respectively. The identical devotees of Vraja and Nabadwip simultaneously attain to the pleasures of service in the realm of Krishna and Gaura.

Sri Jiva Gosvami writes in his work *Gopala-campu* that "the supreme transcendental realm is called Goloka being the abode of go, transcendental cows, and gopa, transcendental cowherds. This is the seat of the rasa pastimes of the absolute Sri Krishna. Again the realm is called Svetadvipa owing to the realization of some of the rasas which are the inconceivable manifestation derived from the untouched purity of that supreme realm. The twofold entities of the supreme Goloka and the supreme Svetadvipa are indivisibly the realm of Goloka."

The gist of the whole matter is this - Goloka as Svetadvipa is eternally manifest because the pleasures of enjoyment of the rasa could not be had in its entirety in the pastimes of Krishna in Vraja. He accepts the emotion and effulgence of His predominated moiety, Sri Radhika, and makes an eternal pastime for the enjoyment of Krishna-rasa there. Sri Krishnacandra coveting to taste the following pleasures, viz., to realize (1) the nature of the greatness of love of Sri Radha; (2) the nature of the wonderful sweetness of His love of which Sri Radhika has got the taste; (3) the nature of the exquisite joy that accrues to Sri Radha by Her realization of the sweetness of His love, took His birth, like the moon, in the ocean of the womb of Sri Sachi-devi. The esoteric desire of Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhu is herein made manifest.

In the Veda it is also said, "Let me tell you the mystery. In Nabadwip, the identical realm of Goloka, on the bank of the Ganges, Gauracandra who is Govinda, the entity of pure cognition, who has two hands, who is the soul of all souls, who has the supreme great personality as the great meditative sannyasin and who is beyond the threefold mundane attributes, makes the process of pure unalloyed devotion manifest in this mundane world. He is sole Godhead. He is the source of all forms, the Supreme Soul and is Godhead manifesting Himself in yellow, red, blue and white colors. He is the direct entity of pure cognition full of the spiritual (cit) potency. He is the figure of the devotee. He is the bestower of devotion and cognizable by devotion alone. The selfsame Gauracandra, who is no

other than Krishna Himself, in order to taste the rasa of the pastimes of Radha-Krishna in Goloka, is manifest in the eternal realm of Nabadwip identical with Goloka."

This is also clear from the Vedic declarations, viz., *asan varnas trayah, krishna-varnam tvisakrishnam, yatha pasyah pasyati rukma-varnam, mahan prabhur vai* and various other statements of the theistic scriptures. Just as Sri Krishna had His birth in the mundane Gokula through the agency of Yogamaya who is the primal energy of the Supreme Lord, so with her help He manifests the lila of His birth in the womb of Saci-devi in Nabadwip on this mundane plane.

These are the absolute truths of spiritual science and not the outcome of imaginary speculation under the thralldom of the deluding energy of Godhead.

८

स्नान गान्ग वारि बाल सन्ना रन्ना वहेलनम्
 बालिकादि पारिहास्य बह्नि बाल्य लीलनम्
 कूत तर्क च्छात्र शिक्शकादि वाद तत्परम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

8

snāna-gāṅga-vāri-bāla-sanga-ranga-khelanam
 bālikādi-pārihāsyā-bhaṅgi-bālya-līlanam
 kūṭa-tarka-chāṭtra-śikṣakādi-vāda-tatparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The beautiful child Sri Nimai-sundara swam and played in the Ganga, enjoying ecstatic games with those divine boys who had taken birth on earth in order to enjoy the pastime of being his friends. When they sported in the Ganga, endless waves of joy would arise moment after moment in that river of love and bliss. It is impossible to estimate the limits of happiness of his friends when they were playing in the water with Lord Gaurasundara. Sri Gaurasundara is Krishna himself, the beautiful prince of Vraja and the lifter of Govarddhana hill. Sri Gaurasundara would sometimes tease young girls when they came to the river to bathe and collect pots of water. But this same young boy could also put forward shrewd arguments to the Sanskrit teachers and logicians of the district. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Holy Abode of Sri Nabadwip Dham by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

By the mercy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu we are all now present at His place of Pastimes, Sri Nabadwip-Dham, a very auspicious and transcendental place. Mahaprabhu appeared in Sri Mayapur and played here in the nine islands of Nabadwip: Antardwip, Simantadwip, Godrumadwip, Madhyadwip, Koladwip, Modadrumadwip, Jahnudwip, and Rudradwip. These are the nine islands and everywhere here Mahaprabhu's Pastimes are going on, they are eternal. Vrindavan Dasa Thakur said:

*adyapiha caitanya ei saba lila kare
ya'ra bhagye thake se dekhaye nirantare*

Those pastimes of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are still going on, and those who are very fortunate can see that through their transcendental vision. Everything is always covered by illusion, Maya, and to our eyes this Nabadwip-Dham is also covered by that illusion. There are two types of Maya: Yogamaya and Mahamaya. Yogamaya is always giving nourishment to her Lord, whereas Mahamaya prevents any disturbance from entering that plane.

Our soul is now covered by illusion: we are attracted by the Chaya-shakti, the shadow-power of Krishna, therefore we now live far from that transcendental world. But when Krishna will bestow His mercy upon our head, Maya will remove the illusion from us and we will be able to see the transcendental Dham and we shall also be able to serve there.

The Maya-shakti is very heavy for us because we are very tiny souls. She is always attracting us through her illusion. In one way, it is for our rectification, no doubt, but it is not a happy position for the conditioned souls. However, we will get relief from this environment if we try to know our position, and what is Krishna consciousness.

If we do this, then by the mercy of Krishna and His devotee we will get strength to come out from the illusory environment, and, when we try, Krishna will help us. That assistance comes to us through His devotees.

Everything comes through the proper channel. Sometimes direct mercy comes from the upper level, but normally, or generally, it comes through the established proper channel:

*sadhu-shastra-kripaya yadi krisnonmukha haya
sei jiva nistare, maya tahare chadaya*
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila 20.120)

The mercy of the sadhu and Guru takes us to the transcendental level. When we can stand firm in our position there, then Mayadevi will leave us. It is necessary to try to preach this type of conception. As much as we have it ourselves, we are

to distribute this clear vision and give it to others. Everywhere there is some possibility, from the lowest level up to the highest; everyone can try to give some good to others. Actually our only life's goal is Krishna consciousness, and it is coming through sadhu, Guru and Vaishnava. It comes from their mercy through our sincere activity of service to them.

You are fortunate to be connected with such knowledge. Somehow or other, you have received some experience and inspiration, and that is why you have come here to hear about the glories of Mahaprabhu, and you are trying to increase your mood of devotion as much as possible. Many devotees constantly feel disturbances from many things. From within themselves they are subject to kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsaryya: lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, and jealousy. The only way to gain relief from such a position has been given by Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhu:

*vaco vegam manasaè krodha-vegam
jihva-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etan vegan yo visaheta dhiraè
sarvvam apimam prithivim sa shisyat*
(Sri Upadeshamrita)

It is necessary to try to control these tendencies within us, and it is only possible through service. When the mood of eternal service to Krishna will reveal itself in our heart, then everything else will leave us. At that time our intention will always be directed only for the service of Sri Guru-Vaishnava.

The Scriptures say, sadhu-sanga! A sadhu is one who is a perfect servitor. He is always engaged in service to Krishna with his full energy. One who has no desire for himself or anything except service to Krishna—he is a real sadhu. Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita says:

*Krishna-bhakta—niskama, ataeva 'shanta'
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kami—sakali 'ashanta'*
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila 19.149)

Ashanta means people who are always disturbed by the illusory environment. However, one can automatically get relief from the reactions of his bad activities

if he can have no desire for his own purpose but can constantly try to give satisfactory service to sadhu, Guru and Vaishnava.

Many of our friends always feel disturbances from their mundane activities. But they can control them very easily—the method is to try very intensely and exclusively to engage themselves in service to Guru and the Vaishnavas. Such service goes directly to Krishna. If they try in that way they will get relief from the illusory environment.

We are always between hopefulness and hopelessness! Hope comes when we are correcting ourselves in line with the transcendental world, but when we are disconnected from that level, then a hopeless position comes to us. It is, therefore, always necessary to keep connection with that transcendental level, and if we try in the way of service we will gain relief very easily.

*kama esa krodha esa, rajoguna-samudbhavaè
maha-shano maha-papma, viddhy enam iha vairinam*
(Srimad Bhagavad-gita 3.37)

There are three kinds of qualities or modes of nature (gunas) always playing within our body and mind: sattva-guna, rajo-guna and tamo-guna. Of these, sattva-guna sometimes can give a good result for our practising life, but the true practising life is mainly beyond the three qualities of nature, and that is called nirguna. Krishna advised in Srimad Bhagavad-gita: “You always try to stay in the level of nirguna where these three, sattva-guna, rajo-guna and tamo-guna, have no play.”

Sattva-guna can give us auspiciousness and take our mind to an auspicious level, but Krishna consciousness lives beyond even that. Attachment to Krishna is necessary. Rupa Goswami Prabhu quoted:

*krishna-bhakti-rasa-bhavita matiè
kriyatam yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam
janma-koti-sukritair na labhyate*

Hankering is the main thing necessary to gain that transcendental knowledge. When that will reveal itself in our heart fully, other disturbances will automatically leave us, just as when the sun rises in the east, all darkness is dispelled from our section of the Earth. So it is necessary for us to have hankering for Krishna-bhakti.

We can see in the Vedas many varieties of auspicious practising moods. The Vedanta, Puranas, Upanisads, etc. are all always indicating the nirguna plane and trying to take us to that level. If we cannot stay in that nirguna level we will not receive the full result, therefore our activity, mood, and everything, whether viddhi or raga, should always be such as to try to take us to that higher level. But we must want it, then we can go there, otherwise not.

*bhukti-mukti-spriha yavat
pishaci hridi vartate
tavad bhakti-sukhasyatra
katham abhyudayo bhavet*

When attachment and attraction for mundane things live within our heart, they are called pishaci, witches. If witches have us under their spell, then how can Krishna-bhakti live there? Srila Rupa Goswami says it is not possible. Still, if we try with our best mood of service to attain that position, we must get it. It may be sudden or it may be after a long time, but if we try we must get that position, there is no doubt. That attempt is called sadhana. Sadhana is 'the means to the end.' Generally our sadhana guides us to the upper level, and prevents us from falling down to a lower level.

Shravanam-kirttanam, etc. is bhakti-sadhana, but other kinds of sadhana exist under the guidance of different departments of Vedic knowledge, such as yoga-sadhana, jnana-sadhana, karma-sadhana, etc. The intention of all these types of practice is to take us to a higher position. But the topmost position, and the actual need for our supreme transcendental benefit, is only bhakti-yoga. Without bhakti-yoga, other kinds of sadhana such as bhukti or mukti cannot give us the proper result. So if we try to practise shravanam, kirttanam, smaranam, vandanam, etc.—the nine kinds of bhakti-sadhana under the guidance of a proper sadhu—then we will easily receive the good result.

This navadha-bhakti-pitha is Nabadwip-Dham. Each of the nine islands of Nabadwip give some special facility for our practising life. This place where this holy temple Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math has been established, Koladwip, is called pada-sevana ksetra, the place where we can gain direct connection with Krishna through the worship of His lotus feet. But if we really want that then we should sincerely try to get it through the expert—then easily we can have His connection.

In the Scriptures we can see that Krishna's devotee always tries to satisfy the devotees. That position is the supermost position, but at present we are living in another position, that is, mano-jagat, which means the mental world; and that mental world has grown up from the Maya-jagat, the illusory environment. First we must try to disconnect ourselves from the mental world, and fully surrender to Krishna, then we will receive help from Him.

*krishna yadi kripa kare kona bhagyavane
guru-antaryami-rupe shikhaya apane*

From Krishna comes inspiration to attain the transcendental world. He will send a sadhu, a Guru, a Vaishnava, and through them we will receive some light and strength—easily we shall be able to practise with their help, and attain our destination.

There is no doubt that all of you here are fortunate to have a connection with the transcendental world and to have hankering, otherwise why would you have come here? You must try to achieve that transcendental plane through your mood of service, and you will get it very easily if you try in the proper way. The proper way is to satisfy Guru and the Vaishnavas.

When Srila Guru Maharaj established this Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math he simply wanted a place to practise devotional life along with a very few followers. But now it has grown in a very big way, and day by day in order to help others, it is growing bigger. But the line of Srila Guru Maharaj is a very exclusive devotional line.

If we want to serve Srila Guru Maharaj exclusively and not see anything else, we will be relieved of all troubles. We must try to serve Guru very attentively, for

only then will we get that chance, otherwise we will be cheated. Srila Guru Maharaj was very simple-hearted. He did not want to cheat anyone, and that is why he did not make many complications. In his life he only showed Krishna and Krishna-bhakti. We are also trying to proceed within the line of his vision, but if his mercy will not act within us, we will not get that. So in an exclusive way we must try to satisfy Srila Guru Maharaj. Then he will be very happy.

Under the guidance of our mind we may try many things, but that is not really bhakti. Our mind is always going this way and that way. The fickle and mad mind can do anything, but a good result will not always come from that. If we do good things then a good result will come to us, if we do not, then a bad result will come to us; such is our position. We will gain relief from the illusory environment only if in an exclusive way we try to follow our Gurudeva.

Many people can say many things, also the shastras are very vast! All the Scriptures are full of knowledge no doubt, but they are so vast that we cannot discover from them what is good for us. But the sadhu, Guru and the Vaishnavas simply try to satisfy Krishna, and if we follow them, we will easily get the full result of all scriptural advice. Therefore we shall try to proceed in a simple way. Mahaprabhu has also instructed us that it is not necessary to do many things—just chant Hare Krishna, engage in Vaishnava-seva and do Prasada-seva:

*sadhu-sanga, nama-kirttana, bhagavat-shravana
mathura-vasa, shri-murtira shraddhaya sevana
sakala-sadhana-shrestha ei panca anga
Krishna-prema janmaya ei pancera alpa sanga
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila 22.128 & 129)*

Try to satisfy the servitors of Krishna and you will easily receive the result—Krishna-prema, through them. This path is very simple.

Chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra, and engage in Vaishnava-seva. Don't look this side or that, but give your attention only to the service of Gurudeva and the Vaishnavas, and that will be helpful for you.

९

श्री निमाइ पण्डितैति नाम देश वन्दितम्
 नव्य तर्क दक्शह लक्शह दम्बि दम्बह कहन्दितम्
 स्थापितार्त्त कहन्द कहन्द कहन्दितार्त्त सम्भरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

9

śrī nimāi-paṇḍiteti-nāma-deśa-vanditam
 navya-tarka-dakṣa-lakṣa-dambhi-dambha-khaṇḍitam
 sthāpitārtha-khaṇḍa-khaṇḍa-khaṇḍitārtha-sambharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

During the Lord's adolescent pastimes Sri Gaurasundara was known throughout Nadia district as the brilliant scholar Nimai Pandit. With his ingenious arguments he could humble all the proud logicians. Rendering the scholars speechless by cancelling and reversing their logic and conclusions, the Lord would then refute his own opinions and re-justify his opponent's original statements. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Chapter sixteen of Jaiva Dharma by Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

Vrajanath lay in his bed in his own home and deeply thought, "Who am I?" That question had been answered by his Guru, he now understood.

Vrajanath thought: now I know who I am. I am an atomic particle of light shining from the spiritual sun of Lord Krishna. I am atomic in size, and therefore I possess consciousness, a spiritual identity, and a single drop of spiritual bliss. I have a form that is a tiny fragment of spirit. I am very tiny and my form is somewhat like the moderately sized form of Lord Krishna. But I cannot see my spiritual form. That is my misfortune. That I am now very eager to see this spiritual form means that now I have become fortunate. Why did I fall into this unfortunate situation? I must understand that very clearly. Tomorrow I will place this question before Sri Gurudeva's feet.

He thought about it again and again. After six hours of the night had passed, the goddess of sleep came like a thief and gradually stole away his wakefulness. Then when the night was ending he dreamed that he had renounced the material world and accepted the garments of a Vaishnava sadhu. When his sleep broke he thought, "Now the Lord will take me from this material life." He went to the family shrine of Goddess Durga.

His students came and fell at his feet and requested, "We have come to study logic. Please teach us the book Kusumanjali. That is our wish." Vrajanath humbly replied, "Like Nimai Pandit, I too have closed my books. I have made my mind place its gaze on a different path. Please find another teacher." Then one by one the students left.

The matchmaker Caturbhuj Misra visited Vrajanath's grandmother with a proposal for Vrajanath's marriage. He said, "Vijayanatha Bhattacharya comes in a good family. His daughter is very beautiful. She would be good for your grandson. The Bhattacharya has not yet promised his daughter to anyone." Vrajanath's grandmother became very happy, hearing this marriage proposal. But Vrajanath thought, "What a calamity! Now I have decided to renounce the world so how can any good come from this talk of marriage? With Vrajanath on one side and his mother, grandmother, and the elderly ladies of the family on the other, there was much talking about it. In that way the day passed.

At sunset there were clouds, thunder, and rain. That day Vrajanath did not go to Mayapur to visit his Guru. The night passed. The next day there was more talk about the marriage. Vrajanath could not peacefully take his meals or do anything else. At sunset Vrajanath approached the elderly babaji's cottages. He offered dandavat obeisances. The saintly babaji said, "Last night it rained, so you could not come. Now I am very glad to see you."

Vrajanath replied, "O master, many calamities have fallen upon me. Later I will tell you about them. For now I will ask this question: The individual soul is pure spirit. Why does the calamity of residing in the material world fall upon him?" The saintly babaji smiled and recited this verse:

"Covering them with gross and subtle material forms, chaining them with the modes of nature, and pulling them with the painful ropes of karma, Maya leads to

Svargaloka and to hell the criminal souls who, forgetting their own spiritual welfare, have turned from Krishna and become intent on their own happiness."

In Goloka, which is manifested by Lord Baladeva, and in Vaikuntha, which is manifested by Lord Sankarsana, a partial representation of Baladeva, numberless individual souls are eternal associates of the Lord. There they taste the nectar of worshipping and serving the Lord. They are always inclined to spiritual things. They seek the happiness of worshipping the Lord. They are always eager to serve the Lord. Empowered by the Lord's jiva-shakti and cit-shakti, they always have great spiritual strength. They never touch Maya. They do not even know that a potency called maya-shakti exists. Staying in the middle of the circle of the spiritual world, they are very far away from Maya. They always swim in the ocean of pleasure that is worshipping and serving the Lord. They know nothing of suffering, material pleasure or selfish pleasure. They are eternally liberated. Love for the Lord is their entire life. What are grief, death, and fear for them? They do not know those things. When Lord Karanodakasayi Visnu glances at Maya, Lord Karanodakasayi Visnu sends numberless atomic spirit souls to the material world. Because they are now on Maya's side, the many creations of Maya now enter the pathway of their eyes. These souls have all the qualities of the soul which are described in the scriptures (eternity, knowledge and innate blissfulness). However, because they are atomic in size and coming from the borderland of matter and spirit (tatastha) they must place their glance on either the spiritual world or the material world. The individual souls are very weak. How can this not be? These souls did not obtain the spiritual strength that comes from the Lord's mercy, the mercy that comes from properly serving Him. That is why these souls develop a desire to enjoy the pleasures that Maya offers. These souls enter Maya's world, and there Maya imprisons them for what seems an eternity. When these souls again turn to spiritual life and engage in service to the Lord, they can attain the Lord's mercy which will give them spiritual strength. Then they can return to the spiritual world. Oh, I am very unfortunate! I have forgotten that I am eternally a servant of Lord Krishna. I have entered Maya's world, and here Maya keeps me imprisoned. I have forgotten my own spiritual welfare. I am very unfortunate!

Vrajanath said, O master, why did some souls leave the tatastha-loka, the borderline of matter and spirit, and enter the world of Maya? Why did other souls go to the spiritual world?

Babaji replied, saying that Lord Krishna's own qualities are present in a very small degree in the individual spirit souls. Because Lord Krishna has free will, so also the individual souls eternally possess a small quantity of free will. When that free will is used properly the individual soul is favourable to Krishna and turns toward Him. When the free will is misused, the soul is averse to Krishna and turns away from Him. Then the soul tries to enjoy Maya. Puffed up with petty pride, the soul thinks, "I am the enjoyer of matter." Then the pure spiritual form of the soul becomes covered by the five kinds of ignorance that begin with illusion and false-ego. Thus it is the proper or improper use of free will that bring us either liberation or imprisonment in the material world.

Vrajanath said, Lord Krishna is supremely merciful. Why, then, did He make the individual spirit souls so weak that they fall into Maya's world?

Babaji answered, saying that while He is very merciful, Krishna is also playful. Desiring many different kinds of pastimes with individual spirit souls in many different conditions of life, He created many exalted conditions, which culminate in 'maha-bhava' great ecstatic spiritual love for the Lord. And He also created, with the help of Sri Radha's expansion Maya, the degraded material conditions of life, which reach their nadir in 'ahankara' (the soul's misidentification with matter). In this way, by the influence of Sri Radha there is the attainment of limitless transcendental bliss, and by the influence of Maya there is a descent into the lower depths. The souls that thus enter Maya's abyss are not interested in their own spiritual wellbeing. They are averse to Lord Krishna and interested in their own selfish pleasure. Thus they go down lower and lower. However, supremely merciful Lord Krishna sends His own personal associates from His own spiritual world into the material world to make these souls favourable to Him and to lift them out of the abyss. In this way some of the fallen souls gradually become elevated and eventually enter into the spiritual world, where they become eternal associates of the Lord.

Vrajanath asked, why must the individual souls suffer so the Lord can enjoy pastimes like these?

Babaji responded, "What should be said is this: It is by the great mercy of the Lord that the individual souls have free will." Babaji said, "Why not speak in that way?" Inanimate matter is very lowly and unimportant because it has no free will.

It is because they have free will that the individual souls can think they have become masters of the world of matter. "Pain" and "pleasure" are two destinations the mind can attain. What you and I may call "pain", another person, who is attached to it, may call "pleasure". All material pleasures bring only pain at the end. They do not lead to anything but that. Therefore a person attached to material pleasures becomes unhappy at the end. When that unhappiness becomes very acute, the soul begins to desire happiness that is not mixed with sufferings. From that desire comes intelligence, and from that intelligence comes the spirit of inquiry. From the spirit of inquiry comes association with saintly persons, from association with saintly persons comes faith in spiritual life, and from faith in spiritual life one becomes gradually elevated. In this way what began as pain became at the end the giver of auspicious happiness. When it is heated and burnished, impure gold becomes pure. In the same way, when they suffer in Maya's material world, the impure souls averse to Lord Krishna and yearning to enjoy maya become purified. That this suffering turns into the giver of happiness is the mercy of Lord Krishna. Therefore they who are far-sighted see that these sufferings of the conditioned souls eventually bring auspicious happiness. They who are short sighted cannot see that. They see only sufferings.

Vrajanath asked, "Although they may bring happiness at the end, for the present the conditioned souls' sufferings are very painful. Could not the all-powerful Lord invent a different path, one without these sufferings?"

Babaji answered by saying that Lord Krishna enjoys many different kinds of wonderful pastimes. This is one of His wonderful pastimes. A person who is supremely independent can enjoy many different kinds of pastimes, and this may be one of them. Why not? If the Lord has every kind of pastime, then no pastime may be rejected. If one pastime is substituted for another, then still some kind of troubles must be expected. Lord Krishna is the supreme person and the creator. Everyone is subject to His will. If one person is subject to another's will, is there not some difficulty in that? If that difficulty eventually leads to happiness, then it is no difficulty at all. Why do you say it is suffering and difficulty? If to expand Lord Krishna's pastimes the individual souls go through some difficulties, it is to be remembered that the difficulties are only things on the path to ultimate happiness. Lord Krishna's pastimes are naturally full of bliss. If an individual soul of his own free will voluntarily leaves the state of spiritual existence (brahma-nirvana) and enters the world of Maya, accepting the sufferings there, then if

anyone is at fault it is the individual soul who is at fault, Krishna is not at fault.

Vrajanath said, in that situation, what is the harm that Lord Krishna does not give the soul free will? Krishna knows everything. Therefore Krishna knows if a certain soul will misuse his free will and bring suffering to himself. In that situation isn't it cruel of Krishna to give such a person free will. Is it not so?

Babaji said, free will is a precious jewel. In the material world there are many inanimate material objects such as sticks and stones. None of them were given the jewel of free will. That is why inanimate objects are lowly and unimportant. If he had not been given free will, the individual soul would be lowly and unimportant just like inanimate objects. The individual soul is a tiny particle of spirit. Whatever qualities spirit has, the soul must also have. Free will is one of the qualities of spirit. Spirit can never be separated from its eternal qualities. Therefore, as a tiny particle of spirit, the soul must have free will. It is because they have free will that the individual souls are superior to inanimate matter and are active in the material world. The souls, who all have free will, are all the dear servants of Lord Krishna. When they misuse that free will and enter the world of maya, merciful Krishna weeps to see how they are suffering. Eager to deliver them, He follows the individual souls into the material world. Aware that the souls will not see His nectarean pastimes in the material world, He brings His inconceivable pastimes there. Seeing that the conditioned souls do not understand His pastimes, he descends to Nabadwip and teaches them about His form, qualities, and pastimes and about His own holy name, which is the best way for spiritual advancement. And He also teaches them by acting in the role of His own devotee. Oh, how can you place the blame on merciful Krishna? Even though His mercy is fathomless, you remain unfortunate and very pathetic.

Vrajanath asked, is the maya-shakti then our enemy and the cause of our misfortune? Krishna is all-powerful and all-knowing. If Krishna had driven Maya far away, then the individual souls would not have to suffer.

Babaji said, Maya is the reflection of the Lord's internal potency. She is a perverted manifestation of the Lord's pure spiritual potency. She purifies the criminal and rebellious souls. She gives them a way to reform themselves. Maya is a maidservant of Lord Krishna. She punishes the souls averse to Lord Krishna. She gives them medicine and cures them. By forgetting "I am eternally a servant

of Lord Krishna", the individual souls commit a crime. They are at fault. It is because of this crime that the witch Maya punishes them. These criminal souls are sent to the prison that is the world of Maya. It is out of kindness that Lord Krishna sends these criminal souls to the prison of the material world and has placed Maya there as the warden.

Vrajanath asked, if the material world is a prison, then what are the shackles?

Babaji said Maya's shackles are of three kinds: 1. shackles made of the mode of goodness, 2. shackles made of the mode of passion, and 3. shackles made of the mode of ignorance. The criminal souls are bound with these shackles in different appropriate ways. Some souls may be bound with goodness shackles, others with passion shackles, and others with ignorance shackles. All are shackled. There may be golden shackles, silver shackles or iron shackles. Shackles made of different elements do not cease to be shackles.

Vrajanath inquired, how can the shackles of Maya bind the soul, which is an atomic particle of spirit?

Babaji said, material things cannot touch spiritual things. When an individual soul gets the idea "I am the enjoyer of Maya", the subtle coverings of material ego is placed around him. Covered in this way by subtle matter, his feet are bound with Maya's shackles. The individual souls covered with material ego in the mode of goodness are the demigods residing in the higher material planets. Their feet are bound with the golden shackles of the mode of goodness. The individual souls covered with material ego in the mode of passion have a nature that is a combination of the natures of the demigods and the human beings. Their feet are bound with the silver shackles of the mode of passion. The individual souls covered with material ego in the mode of ignorance are intoxicated by material pleasures. Their feet are bound with the iron shackles of the mode of ignorance. None of these shackled souls can leave the prison by their own efforts. All are troubled by many kinds of sufferings.

Vrajanath asked, what activities are done by the souls in Maya's prison?

Babaji said, firstly they do what they can to enjoy material pleasures, and secondly they do what they can to avoid or negate the sufferings that come from the shackles they wear.

Vrajanath asked, please describe to me the first of these actions.

Babaji answered, the sthula-sarira is the gross material body covering the soul. It has six stages of existence: 1. the birth of the material body, 2. its maintenance, 3. its decline, 4. its growth, 5. its change, and 6. its dissolution. The gross material body undergoes these six changes. Hunger, thirst, and other like desires are also part of the body's nature. Pushed by the desire for material pleasures, the soul within the material body becomes an obedient servant of material urges and activities such eating, sleeping and the lustful desire for sexual enjoyment. To attain material pleasures he performs the ten pious rituals that begin with birth and end on the funeral pyre. He performs the eighteen kinds of yajnas described in the Vedas. He hopes "By following the path of pious deeds (karma), I will enjoy with the demigods in Svargaloka. When I again enter the human realm, I will take birth in a brahmana's home and I will enjoy many happinesses." Or, the imprisoned soul may follow the impious path. By performing many sins, he enjoys sense pleasures. By the first course of action one attains Svargaloka and other higher material planets. Then, when his period of enjoyment ends, the soul again attains a human body. By the second course of action one goes to suffer in hellish misery because of his many sins. When his period of suffering ends, the soul again attains a human body. In this way the soul imprisoned by Maya travels on the wheel of karma. Day after day he struggles to enjoy material pleasures and he tastes the fruits of his actions. Thus, beginning at a time he cannot trace, the soul wanders in the material worlds. By performing pious deeds, he briefly enjoys, and by performing sins, he briefly suffers.

Vrajanath asked, now please describe the second kind of action.

Babaji said, caught in a trap of many needs, the soul in a gross material body suffers. To drive away these sufferings, he acts in many ways. To drive away hunger and thirst, he struggles to get food and drink. And so these things may come easily he labours to collect money. To drive away the cold, he collects clothing. To stop the thirst for sense pleasures he becomes married and performs many other activities also. To fill the needs and increase the happiness of his

family and descendants, he labours hard. When the gross material body is attacked by disease, he must find medicines or other ways to cure it. To protect his property he enters into disputes in the law courts. Tossed about by the six waves - lust, anger, greed, bewilderment, pride and envy - he engages in fighting, argument, violence to others, tormenting others, robbing others' wealth, cruelty, senseless pride, and a host of other evil deeds. Desiring to live independently, he builds his own house and performs other deeds. In this way the soul in Maya's prison struggles day and night to attain pleasure and stop distress.

Vrajanath said, had Maya only covered the soul with the linga-sarira (astral body), would that not have been enough?

Babaji said no. With just the linga-sarira, no one can perform actions. Therefore the covering of the sthula-sarira (gross body) is necessary. Following the results of actions performed by the gross physical body, various desires are created in the astral body. Because of these desires that linger within the mind and the astral body, at the time of his next birth, the soul thinks in ways that make him attain an appropriate new physical body.

Vrajanath said, what is the relationship between actions and the results they bring? The mimamsa philosophers say that God, who awards the results of actions, is only a fiction, that every action produces something called an 'apurva' and this 'apurva' gives the result of the action. Is this true?

Babaji said the followers of karma-mimamsa do not understand the true conclusion of the Vedas. Quickly glancing at the Vedic yajnas and other pious deeds, they come to a hasty conclusion. The true conclusion of the Vedas they do not grasp. The Vedas explain (Svetasvatara Upanisad 4.6 and Mundaka Upanisad 3.1.1):

"In the individual spirit soul and the Supersoul, Supreme Personality of Godhead, are like two friendly birds sitting on the same tree. One of the birds (the individual atomic soul) is eating the fruit of the tree (the sense gratification afforded by the material body), and the other bird (the Supersoul) is not trying to eat these fruits, but is simply watching His friend."* Where is there any mention here of the mimamsa philosophers 'apurva'? Any conclusion that denies the existence of God cannot be good.

Vrajanath asked, why did you say that karma has no beginning?

Babaji answered, material desire is the root from which all karma or fruitive action grows. Ignorance is the root from which material desires grows. That ignorance did not begin within the boundaries of material time. The ignorance that is the root of the individual soul's karma begins at the borderline of matter and spirit (tatastha). Therefore the beginning of karma occurs outside the framework of material time. In that sense karma has no beginning. Vrajanath asked, what is the difference between 'maya' and 'ignorance'? Babaji: Maya is Lord Krishna's potency. Using this potency, He created the material world to purify the rebellious souls. Maya has two features 'avidya' (ignorance) and 'pradhana' (the primordial form of matter). Avidya directs her efforts to the individual souls, and pradhana directs its efforts to inanimate matter. From pradhana the material universes are manifested. From avidya the material desires of the conditioned souls are manifested. Maya also has two other features: 'vidya' (knowledge) and "avidya" (ignorance). These two both direct their efforts to the individual spirit souls. Avidya keeps the souls imprisoned in the material world, and vidya releases them from that prison. When the criminal souls turn toward Lord Krishna, the vidya potency acts on them, and when the criminal souls forget Krishna, the avidya potency acts. Knowledge of Brahman is a specific feature of vidya. The first phase of vidya is pious deeds, and the concluding phase is understanding the truth. Avidya covers the soul and vidya uncovers him.

Vrajanath asked, what does pradhana do?

Babaji said, in the beginning the Supreme Lord employs time to agitate the material energy. In this way the mahat-tattva is produced. Agitated in this way, Maya's feature called 'pradhana' creates things. From the mahat-tattva, the false-ego is manifested. When false-ego is transformed by ignorance, the sky is manifested. From the sky, air is manifested. From air, fire is manifested. From fire, water is manifested. From water, earth is manifested. In this way the five material elements, which are called 'panca-maha-bhuta', are manifested. Now please hear how the five 'tan-matras' are created. When time agitates avidya (ignorance), jnana (knowledge of the impersonal) and karma (fruitive action) are manifested from the mahat-tattva. From the karma thus manifested from the mahat-tattva, the modes of goodness and passion are manifested, and from them

come jnana (knowledge) and kriya (action). From the mahat-tattva, false-ego is manifested. From false-ego, intelligence is manifested. From intelligence, the quality of sound is perceived in the sky. From sound comes touch. Thus sound and touch are manifested the air. From them come 'prana' (the life-force), 'ojah' (energy) and 'bala' (strength). In fire are manifested form, touch, and sound. Then, by the transformation created by time, water is manifested. In water are taste, form, touch and sound. A further transformation brings earth, in which are fragrance, taste, form, touch and sound. The all-knowing purusa-avatara helps these changes become manifested. False-ego has three features: 'vaikarika' (goodness), 'taijasa' (passion), and 'tamasa' (ignorance). From false ego in the mode of goodness, material objects are manifested. From false ego in the mode of passion, the ten material senses are manifested. There are two sets of senses: knowledge-acquiring senses, and working senses. The knowledge-acquiring senses are: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin. The working senses are: voice, hands, feet, genitals and rectum. Even when the gross and subtle elements are assembled together, nothing can happen until the individual soul, the tiny particle of spirit enters.

With a glance, the Supreme Personality of Godhead places the individual soul in the body of gross and subtle elements, and only then does the body begin to move. In this way the senses manifested by the modes of goodness and passion come into contact with the sense-objects. The pradhana has manifested through the mode of ignorance. In this way avidya and pradhana act. Maya is divided into twenty four categories: the five great elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, the five tan-matras, namely fragrance, form, taste, touch, and sound, the previously described ten knowledge-acquiring and working senses, and, in addition to these, mind, heart, intelligence and false-ego. Altogether these are the twenty four categories of matter. The conscious individual spirit soul is the twenty fifth category in the body, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, in the twenty-sixth.

Vrajanath said, in the human body of seven spans, what part is the subtle body, what part the gross body, and where in the body does the spirit soul reside? Please tell me.

Babaji said, the sthula-sarira (gross body) consists of the five gross elements (panca-maha-bhuta), five sense objects (panca-tan-matra) and the ten senses. The

linga-sarira (subtle body) consists of the mind, heart, intelligence and false-ego. The individual spirit false thinks of this material body in terms of "I" and "mine". In this way he does not understand how his own welfare is best served. The soul, a tiny fragment of spirit, exists in a dimension beyond time, space, and the other features of the material world. Even though it is a tiny particle, the soul is all-pervading within the material body. As a tiny drop of sandal-paste cools the entire body, so the soul, situated in one place within the material body, is aware of the pleasure and pains of the body as a whole.

Vrajanath asked, if by his actions (karma) the individual soul creates his own pleasures and sufferings, what does the Supreme Personality of Godhead do?

Babaji replied, the individual soul is the immediate cause but Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the ultimate cause. By his various actions, the individual soul makes himself qualified to receive various results. However, he does not have the power to simply take them. All results must be given to him by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate cause. The Supreme Personality of Godhead gives the results, and the individual spirit soul receives them.

Vrajanath said, through what different stages of life do the souls imprisoned by Maya pass?

Babaji answered, the souls imprisoned by Maya in a gross material body pass through five stages of existence. They are: "acchadita-cetana" (covered consciousness), "sankucita-cetana" (retracted consciousness), "mukulita-cetana" (budding consciousness), "vikacita-cetana" (blossoming consciousness), and "purna-vikacita-cetana" (fully blossomed consciousness).

Vrajanath asked, which souls are in the stage of covered consciousness?

Babaji answered, saying the souls who reside in the bodies of trees, grass, and stones are in the stage of covered consciousness. They are close to being unconscious. Forgetting that they are servants of Krishna, they have entered deeply into the realm of matter. They have no understanding of spirit. All they know is the six changes of material life. This is the lowest depth to which the soul can fall. Ahalya, the yamalarjuna trees, and the seven tala trees are some

examples the Puranas give of souls in this stage of existence. Great offenses push souls into that state, and Lord Krishna's mercy delivers them.

Vrajanath said, which souls are in the stage of retracted consciousness?

Babaji said, animals, birds, snakes, fish, other water-creatures, worms and insects are examples of the beings with retracted consciousness. The beings with covered consciousness exist on the verge of being unconscious. The beings with retracted consciousness have their consciousness a little opened. That consciousness is directed toward eating, sleeping, fearing and bustling to and fro, in order to fulfil a host of desires such as arguing with others over property claims and feeling anger when someone is wronged. However, that consciousness remains unaware of the existence of a world beyond the circle of matter. Monkeys may be mischievous, they may give some thought to understanding the way things work, by thinking "This will happen, and that will not happen", they may plan for the future and may show signs of gratefulness and other like feelings. Some animals have knowledge of the different properties of various objects. However, animals do not search to find God. Therefore their consciousness is said to be retracted.

In the scriptures it is said that the great devotee Bharata took birth as a deer and in that condition he was fully aware of the holy names of the Supreme Lord. However, Bharata was a special case. In general, animals do not have spiritual knowledge. Because of offenses, Bharata and Nrga became animals, but then by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, they again attained an auspicious condition of life.

Vrajanath asked, which souls are in the stage of budding consciousness?

Babaji said, conditioned souls in human bodies display three stages of consciousness: budding consciousness, blossoming consciousness, and fully blossomed consciousness. There are five kinds of human beings: immoral people, atheists who follow moral principles, people who believe in God and follow moral principles, people engaged in practical devotional service (sadhana-bhakti), and people engaged in loving devotional service (bhava-bhakti). Thus, the categories are these, the people who because of ignorance or because of improper knowledge have become atheists, the immoral people, the moral atheists, the moral people who have a little faith in God, the people who firmly believe in

God, the people who, following the rules of the scriptures, engage in sadhana-bhakti and practice devotional service to Vishnu or Sri Krishna, and the people who have attained love for God and thus engage in bhava-bhakti.

The immoral people and the two kinds of atheists are situated in the stage of budding consciousness. The people who believe in God and the people engaged in sadhana-bhakti are situated in the stage of blossoming consciousness, and the people engaged in bhava-bhakti are situated in the stage of fully blossomed consciousness.

Vrajanath said, for how many days do the souls situated in bhava-bhakti continue to stay in Maya's prison?

Babaji replied that this question would be answered later. "Now it is night. You should go home."

१०

श्लोक गान्धर्व वन्दनार्थं दिग्जिगीषु ब्रह्मिष्ठम्
 व्यत्यलङ्कितदि दोषह तर्कितार्थं दूषितम्
 दहस्त युक्ति रुद्धह बुद्धिह दत्त दहीमदादरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

10

śloka-gāṅga-vandanārtha-digjigīṣu-bhāṣitam
 vyatyalankṛtādi-doṣa-tarkitārtha-dūṣitam
 dhvasta-yukti-ruddha-buddhi-datta-dhīmadādaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The world-conquering scholar Keshava Kashmiri met the Lord on the bank of the Ganges. At the Lord's request, the pandit composed many wonderful prayers glorifying the sacred Ganges. Nimai Pandit amazed the scholar when he pointed out several rhetorical errors in his poetry. Keshava Kashmiri skillfully presented logical arguments in his own favour but was ultimately defeated in the debate. When the imperfections in the poetry of the pandit were exposed and he could think of no further arguments in support of his own conclusions he became perplexed. Boys witnessing the pandit's discomfort began to laugh but Sri Gaurasundara showed respect to the pandit by stopping the students from laughing.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The life journey of the jiva souls
 by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

"How does the soul first appear in this world? From what stage of spiritual existence does he fall into the material world?" This is a broad question, which requires some background information.

There are two classes of souls, jivas, who come into this world. One class comes from the spiritual Vaikuntha planets by the necessity of nitya-lila, the eternal pastimes of Krishna. Another comes by constitutional necessity.

The brahmajyoti, the nondifferentiated marginal plane, is the source of infinite jiva souls, atomic spiritual particles of nondifferentiated character. The rays of the Lord's transcendental body are known as the brahmajyoti, and a pencil of a ray of the brahmajyoti is the jiva. The jiva soul is an atom in that effulgence, and the brahmajyoti is a product of an infinite number of jiva atoms.

Generally, souls emanate from the brahmajyoti which is living and growing. Within the brahmajyoti, their equilibrium is somehow disturbed and movement begins. From nondifferentiation, differentiation begins. From a plain sheet of uniform consciousness, individual conscious units grow. And because the jiva is conscious it is endowed with free will. So, from the marginal position they choose either the side of exploitation or the side of dedication. Krishna bhuli sei jiva anadi bahirmukha. Anadi means that which has no beginning. When we enter the land of exploitation, we come within the factor of time, space, and thought. And when we come to exploit, action and reaction begins in the negative land of loan. Although we strive to become masters, really we become losers.

Goloka and Vaikuntha servitors are also seen to be within the jurisdiction of the brahmamanda, the material universe, but that is only a play, lila. They come from that higher plane only to take part in the Lord's pastimes and then return. The fallen souls come from the marginal position within the brahmajyoti, and not from Vaikuntha. The first position of a soul in the material world will be like that of Brahma, the creator. Then his karma may take him to the body of a beast like a tiger, where he is surrounded with a tigerish mentality, or to the body of a tree or creeper, where different impressions may surround him. In this way, one is involved in action and reaction. The case is complex; to analyze the details of the history of a particular atom is unnecessary. We are concerned with the general thing: how the transformation of the material conception springs from pure consciousness.

Matter is not independent of spirit. In the brahmajyoti we are equipoised in the marginal potency as an infinite number of pinpoints of spiritual rays, electrons of consciousness. Consciousness means endowed with free will, for without free will no consciousness can be conceived. An atomic pinpoint of consciousness has very meagre free will, and by misuse of their free will some jivas have taken their chance in the material world. They refused to submit to the supreme authority; they wanted to dominate. So, with this germinal idea of domination, the jiva enters into the world of exploitation. In the Bhagavad-gita (7.27) it is stated:

*iccha-dvesa samutthena
dvandva-mohena bharata
sarva-bhutani sammoham
sarge yanti parantapa*

"Two principles in a crude form awaken in the jiva: hatred and desire. Then, gradually the soul comes down to mingle with the mundane world." At first, sympathy and apathy develop in a crude form, just as when a sprout springs up with two leaves. And gradually these two things help us to dive deep into this mundane world.

Upon retiring from the world of exploitation, the soul may return to his former position in the brahmajyoti as spirit. But, if the soul has gathered the tendency of dedication through his previous devotional activities, he does not stop there; he pierces through the brahmajyoti and goes towards Vaikuntha. Why has the soul come to the world of exploitation, and not the world of dedication? That should be attributed to his innate nature, which is endowed with free will. It is a free choice. This is substantiated in the Bhagavad-gita (5. 14):

*na kartrtvam na karmani
lokasya srjati prabhuh
na karma-phala-samyogam
svabhavas tu pravartate*

"The soul is responsible for his entrance into the land of exploitation." The responsibility is with the soul, otherwise, the Lord would be responsible for his distressed condition. But Krishna says that the soul's innate free will is responsible for his entanglement in the material world. The soul is conscious, and consciousness means endowed with freedom. Because the soul is atomic, his free will is imperfect and vulnerable. The result of that free choice is that some are coming into the material world, and some are going to the spiritual world. So, the responsibility is with the individual soul.

When the soul is within the brahma conception he only has a type of global consciousness or national consciousness but no individual consciousness; only a hazy consciousness. Then, when there is a push from the side of Mahavishnu, Sadashiva, then from that creative impetus the Prakriti (Nature) begins to act and the mahat-tattva arises. This is just like in the first stage of life when the soul is

present within the mother's womb and its body is in a nondifferentiated state with no defined bodily conception - no awareness of an eye, no head, no hand, no leg. In this first stage of the child, in what is known as the embryo, the soul is in a stage like the mahat-tattva. The mahat-tattva is like a big embryo, and from there the child starts to know or experience an eye, ear, hair, and everything. Gradually, from the mahat-tattva everything is springing up and growing.

Prakriti is the womb and the first stage of the embryo is the mahat-tattva, and then from that stage differentiation and bifurcation begins, gradually. Many individual jiva conceptions are coming out from the womb of Prakriti. First there is a general ego consciousness, and then from there so many, many jiva conceptions are coming out. The individual egos are coming from the mahat-tattva. A huge number. The common, shared conception of all the ego of the jiva souls is the mahat-tattva, and from there so many, many individual egos are emanating.

Prakriti is like a watery substance and consciousness is mingling with this material substance. Consciousness is coming into Prakriti, into water, and then there is a commotion, and something arises and comes out from that: the mahat-tattva. This mahat-tattva divides itself into innumerable units of ahankara (ego). The Pancatanmatra appears (the conglomerate of material elements such as earth, water and heat). The fivefold variegated form of creation come into existence. The five primordial substances each divide into three, becoming fifteen. Then lastly, from the tamoguna (the inert nature), the earth, water, fire, air and empty sky are generated. These things are the grossest outcome, the most gross product of Prakriti. The eye, ear and other sense organs are the middle level products of Prakriti. And the sun and other celestial bodies are the more subtle forms of material existence that come into existence. Twenty four categories of material substances are discussed, we find ultimately, in this Sankhya philosophy, which explains nature.

In the mahat-tattva the soul has only a hazy individual consciousness, without any specific individuality or distinctness. But all possibility is there within the soul in a germinal form. In the non-differentiated stage one cannot detect what possibility a particular soul may have, but still all kinds of possibility exist within the soul. Even in the stage of mahapralaya, at the time of withdrawal of creation, when the universe is dissolved and everything enters into the stage of Prakriti which is a flowing energy or water-like substance, even in that stage the whole

thing is preserved, the possibilities within each soul are preserved, inwardly. Just as how a whole tree is latent within a seed. It is there, as a possibility. In a germinal form it is there, as a possibility. With the germinal idea of domination, the soul enters into the world of exploitation.

Sympathy and apathy develop in a crude form, just as when a sprout springs up with two leaves. And gradually these two things help us to dive deep into this mundane world.

Free will is only absolute with the Absolute Truth. Because we are finite, our free will is infinitesimal. The possibility of committing a mistake is there. Our first choice was to dominate, and so, gradually we have entered the world of domination. As a result of this first action, everything else has developed. So, in different ranks, the species have been divided, from the demigods down to the trees and stones. And watery bodies, gaseous bodies, anything that we find here has evolved in that way. The activating principle in any form of embryological development is the soul, and from the soul, everything has evolved.

When someone dies, generally, they are taken to the court of Yamaraj. They are taken to the administrator of Pretyaloka and they enter the world of the departed souls. But not all souls will go there for there are exceptions. Those who enter into ananya bhakti, suddha bhakti, pure loving devotion to the Lord, they will not enter into the world of the departed souls. The jurisdiction changes, in the case of those who have come in connection with the Guru and suddha bhakti.

Generally, we may take it that within twenty four hours the atma, the soul, is taken to the court of Yamaraj. Then after one year his case is taken up and he is judged. The amount of sin and the amount of good that he has done is judged at that time. After one year of waiting in suspense, waiting in a state of suspension, like a person on bail waiting for the judgement of his case, he is asked what he will take first, the narak (hell) or svarga (heaven). Which do you like to enjoy first? Will you enjoy the fruits of your good action first? But of course if the amount of karma is great, the bad action, then he will have to suffer the results of his bad action first, and then after that enjoy the reactions arising from his good actions. This is the general case but there are particular cases, where an urgent case will be dealt with urgently, just as in a court. Some may take birth immediately after death; he may enter into another womb. Different cases are dealt with differently.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, we find that when Devaki the mother of Krishna has just been married and her husband Vasudev was taking her to his own house, Kamsa, the brother of Devaki, was taking the reins of the horses and conducting the chariot as they were going along on the way to Vasudev's house. Then suddenly a sound came from the sky, saying "Kamsa, you are relishing so much this occasion of great joy, taking your sister with so much cheerfulness to her husband's house, but her eighth child will kill you." Twice, or thrice, this sound came from the sky. Then Kamsa was enraged and he took his sister by the hair and went to cut her throat. But Vasudev came to protect her and said, "You are a hero and you should not fear death". In this way Vasudev began a discussion with Kamsa. "You have no cause to feel fear of her, but only from her child. I assure you that the children, when they are born, will be given to your hand, and you may do away with them; but leave her for she is not going to kill you."

At that time Vasudev comes to talk about philosophy, and he says that before someone is dead his next life begins. Before he is dead, when he is just going to die, his previous thoughts and actions come in a subtle form, rushing and gathering together, and every one of them demands "His next birth I want to take." According to the intensity or the priority, they propose, "The next chance I want, I want priority; the next chance I must get!". And so in this way the next birth is determined.

For before actual death the next birth is determined, when the idea comes and captures him, the idea or mentality of different types comes and takes possession of him, and determines what he will be born as next. Suppose anger, or jealousy, or greed capture him - there are so many propensities and each wants the first chance to take possession of the atma, the soul. And then when he dies the propensity with the most powerful priority takes him. The idea takes him to some society, to his own society, and from there to the physical plane once again. Suppose the propensity of very great anger comes. Very much anger. Then the buffalo mentality takes possession. A very ferocious mentality, then the tiger mentality takes possession. It takes him up into the tiger society and he takes rebirth with a tiger body. In the case of king Bharata, he had left his kingdom and left everything behind when he was still in his youthful stage of life. He left it all and took to the life of a sadhu, a sage. But when he was dying he thought of his small deer, his pet, "If I die this small deer will also die without food or protection". His thinking was like that. So when his soul passed away he had to

enter a deer body. He had to become a deer. Into that society he had to go, and in a deer's body he had to come out and live in the world again.

In the Karma Kanda we find that there is mention of a one year period of suspension for the departed soul. During that time, the rishis of the Karma Kanda say, the successors and holders of property of the departed soul can try to make some sacrifices and give help for the departed soul. There is a one year period of suspension. Pinda. Help may be arranged for the dead person, and then finally the person comes and talks with Yama (the God of Death) and a final decision is made.

This is the general case. But there are particular instances where things may happen differently, according to the gravity of the situation.

For those who have died and are without any physical body, there may be suffering, also. Just as in a dream where we also suffer and feel pain without feeling things through this body. It is possible to feel intense pain, in this way, and that is naraka (hell). With no physical body, but only in the astral or mental body, suffering can be there for the soul. In an astral body the soul may suffer in hell for some duration.

According to the intensity, the magnitude of the actions a person has done, they are judged by Yama (Death). Yama is the controlling consciousness, the deciding power who dispenses judgement and sends people who have erred into a place of suffering. There is a government in the mental world, just as there is a government in this physical world. The body we find within us in a dream, the body we feel things through in a dream, it exists in a plane where there are so many astral bodies, and in that plane of existence there is a government, a managing controller. The astral body is in that plane and there is a government administrating and dealing with the souls in that plane, which is known as Pretyaloka, the world of the departed souls.

After someone dies the family may invite us to do kirtan, to chant Hare Krishna. And of course that will help the person who has died. That vibration will help him, and it is a higher help than this ordinary sraddha ceremony. Offering Bhagavat Prashad for the deceased person, and doing kirtan, in this way we can help the departed souls.

But then, we must realize that making so many enquiries about what is really non-essential knowledge, about death and the process of rebirth, and these types of things, that is not the proper path to follow. If we are seeking to gain knowledge and not bhakti, that sort of scrutinizing knowledge-seeking has been discouraged by the Srimad Bhagavatam. If you take up the path of knowledge, the jnana marga, it won't take you to the real place, the real goal. Knowledge can help you in the beginning; it can help to consolidate your faith. Then help will come to you from the plane of faith and take you to your goal. A particle of sand, you can study a particle of sand, for lifetimes together, but don't go to that side, don't engage yourself in that sort of inquiry. Go instead towards the ananda marga, the path of bliss and ecstatic joy.

The Absolute is sat-chit-ananda. Eternal existence, knowledge and bliss. Don't waste your time doing research into the sat and chit aspects. Don't search for an understanding of existence (sat) or knowledge (chit). Seek ananda. Seek ecstasy and fulfilment. Try to start your journey towards ananda. To some extent the attaining of realization of the sat and chit aspects of the Absolute can help you; but only take that much help which is really required for you to gain a proper understanding of existence. But what is there within you, the intricate demand of your inner nature, is your inner need for happiness. So begin your journey towards ultimate happiness and go direct, without any diversion. Direct your journey towards ananda-maya. Search for fulfilment, devotion and dedication. Sraddha. Be optimistic.

*jñāne prayāsam udapāśya namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

Brahma said to Krishna:

Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to hearing these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.

- Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.3

११

सूत्रं व्रित्तिं तिप्पनीशहृतं सूक्ष्मं वाचनाद्भुतम्
 द्हातुमात्रं क्रिश्णशक्तिं सर्वं विश्वसम्बद्धम्
 रुद्धं बुद्धिं पण्डितौघं नान्ययुक्तिं निर्द्धारम्
 प्रेमं द्हातुं देवम् ऐव नौमि गौरसुन्दरम्

॥

sūtra-vṛtti-tippanīṣṭa-sūkṣma-vācanādbhutam
 dhātu-mātra-kṛṣṇa-śakti-sarvva-viśva-sambhṛtam
 ruddha-buddhi-ṇḍitaugha-nānya-yukti-nirddharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Elaborately explaining the sutras (aphorisms) taught in Sanskrit grammar and the science of logic, Sri Gaurasundara explained to his students both the superficial and the deepest meanings of those sutras. The Lord's beautiful style of presentation of the inner significances of the sutras completely amazed all the learned scholars of Nadia. Sri Nimai Pandit explained how all the seven thousand verbal root sounds contained in Sanskrit grammar find their fullest expression when they are understood to be vibrational energies emanating from the wondrous flute song of Sri Krishna. Scholars sat listening to him in amazement, their powerful intellects paralysed by his intriguing presentation. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Lord of the Cows
 by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

"May that lord of the cows be satisfied by us. Who is Indra when compared to Krishna? Krishna is the master of Indra. And yet He has appeared as the master of cows; the Supreme Absolute Truth has accepted a simple position as the keeper of cows. Superficially, He is a mere cowherd boy. But let that cowherd boy, who holds within Him the power of controlling the whole universe, be satisfied with us. We want to worship that Lord who has taken the humble position of the king of the cows."

*deve varsati yajna-viplavarusa vajrasma-varsanilaih
 sidat-pala-pasu-striyatma-saranam drstvanukampy-utsmayam
 utpatyaika-karena sailamavalo lilocchilindhram yatha
 bibrad gosthamapan mahendram adubhit priyan na indro gavam
 Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.26.25*

The very gist of the Govardhana lila, the very substance of the pastime, is represented in this verse. The milkmen in Vrndavana used to observe a sacrifice to satisfy the king of heaven, Indra, at whose command the rain, clouds, and other subtle elementary powers move. The main wealth of the cowherd men is the cow, and the cow's main food is grass. Only rain can produce grass, and so the cowherd men used to perform sacrifice to satisfy the subtle power who is supposed to be in command of natural substances like rain.

By satisfying Indra, favorable rains would come and there would be sufficient grass. The cows could then graze easily on the grass and generate milk profusely. The gopas, the cowherd men and their families, used to make different preparations from the milk, sell them in the marketplace, and in that way earn their livelihood.

As the grazing ground in one place was finished, they would move from one forest to another. Only for the purpose of obtaining grass for the cows, Krsna's father Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men would wander from one place to the next. In this way, they lived sometimes in Vrndavana, sometimes in Nandagrama, and sometimes in Gokula. Once, Krsna wanted to assert Himself and modify the worship of Indra. He wanted to establish His own domain, Vrndavana, in its pristine glory.

Although He was only a boy, He was a boy of extraordinary capacity. He was only seven years old. But in the Padma Purana it is said that the development or growth of special personalities is one and a half times that of ordinary persons. Although Krsna was only seven years old by ordinary calculation, He was eleven according to general calculation.

Krsna said, "Why should we perform this sacrifice to Indra? We have a direct concern with Govardhana Hill and not Indra." He announced this idea to the gopas, and somehow, willingly or reluctantly, the gopas submitted to the advice of Krsna. Nanda Maharaja was influenced by affection for his son, and, because

he was the king, he told them, "This time we shall worship Govardhana Hill and not Indra."

And so the gopas, the milkmen of Vrndavana, followed Krsna's advice - some reluctantly and some willingly - and they began the sacrifice for Govardhana Hill. This news reached Indra, who thought to himself: "A boy of special capacity lives there. Now He has taken the leadership of Vrndavana and stopped this ancient sacrifice to me. For a long time it was the tradition of the gopas to perform sacrifice to satisfy me, and now one boy is the cause of stopping my sacrifice!" He was very much enraged. Indra ordered the clouds and the wind and the lightning to attack the residents of Vrndavana.

According to Vedic understanding, all the elements are personified. In ancient days, the Aryans and Rajarsis, elevated human beings and great sages, used to see everything as persons. They saw everything in a personal way. They thought of the creepers, the trees, and everything else in the environment as persons. They understood that they were all persons who, according to karma, are wandering through the different species of life.

Once I was asked by a professor of biology about alternatives to Darwinian evolution. I advised him that evolution from consciousness to matter may be understood on the basis of Berkeley's theory. Whatever we think of is really part of our consciousness. And consciousness means person. Everything that we may be conscious of is a person. We may think of the wind as an inanimate object, but it was thought of in the Vedic line as a person. Lightning, wind, clouds, and rain are all persons. Whatever we consider to be elementary matter, gross and subtle, were all considered by the ancient seers of the truth to be persons.

Indra commanded the wind, the clouds, and the rain to go and devastate the whole area of Gokula Vrndavana. "The residents of Vrndavana have insulted me!" He said. "They have rejected me, have stopped worshiping me, and are instead worshipping that mountain, that hill of Govardhana. I can't tolerate this insult! Go and devastate them." By the order and wrath of Indra, the master of all the higher subtle elements, heavy rain began to fall. And so thunder, hail, and rain simultaneously attacked the whole of Vraja Mandala.

Consequently, all the residents of Vrndavana were thrown into a great disaster. Misery, pain, and sorrow afflicted the animals and the protectors of the animals,

the gopalas. So the helpless - the women, children, and animals of Vrndavana - had no alternative but to take refuge of Krsna. They all came to Krsna for relief. They cried, "O Krsna! Now what are we to do? You influenced us to stop the sacrifice meant for Indra, and now Indra, being vindictive, has begun to afflict us in this very heavy way. How can we live? Please save us!" They all came to Krsna for protection. Seeing this, Krsna had much pity for them. Being merciful upon them, He smiled a little, thinking, "They have all come to Me for relief."

At that time, with only one hand Krsna lifted up the Govardhana mountain. For Him, it was a very easy thing; with only one hand, He uprooted the hill and lifted it up as a child lifts a toy ball. And holding up that great mountain, Krsna gave protection to all those who were living in Gokula. The men, women, and children of Vrndavana brought the cows and all their worldly goods and took shelter beneath Govardhana Hill.

The whole cowherd society was given shelter under that hill. In this way, by lifting Govardhana Hill, Krsna gave protection to the residents of Vrndavana, and crushed the pride of the lord of heaven, Indra himself.

And so Nanda Maharaja prays in this verse, "May that lord of the cows be satisfied by us. Who is Indra when compared to Krsna? Krsna is the master of Indra. And yet He has appeared as the master of cows; the Supreme Absolute Truth has accepted a simple position as the keeper of cows. Superficially, He is a mere cowherd boy. But let that cowherd boy, who holds within Him the power of controlling the whole universe, be satisfied with us. We want to worship that Lord who has taken the humble position of the king of the cows." From this verse of Srimad-Bhagavatam, we can understand the position of the Lord's pastime at Govardhana. It is also described here that when the Vrajavasis worshipped Him and engaged in sacrifice for His satisfaction, they saw Govardhana Hill as the Supreme Person, extending His hands, accepting the things offered to Him, and feeding Himself.

At that time, Krsna pointed out, "You see! You thought that Govardhana Hill was only a heap of stone. No - it is living, it is the Supreme Personality of Godhead." At that time, Krsna revealed Himself as Govardhana Hill and showed how it is also His extended self. According to authorities in our line, Radha-kunda is the extended self of Srimati Radharani and Govardhana is the extended self of Krsna. And so we worship a stone from Govardhana Hill, a part of Giridhari, as Krsna

Himself. We may understand from this that a part of the infinite is infinite. And yet so feeble is our ordinary vision that although Govardhana-sila is a part of the infinite, and therefore also infinite, to our material vision it is only a piece of stone. This pastime shows that a thing may appear to be ordinary stone, but its possibility is infinite. In the general sense, Einstein's theory of relativity has announced that anything we see is that thing plus something more. In his own scientific way he explains that the reality of a thing includes its possibilities, its prospect - reality is not at a standstill.

Reality is not limited to what is seen or conceived by our senses. Our vision or estimation of anything may be limited, but unknown to us, its prospect may be unlimited. Everything has infinite possibility. We do not even know what infinite possibility a particle of sand may have. We do not know what sort of possibility may exist within a leaf of a plant. It may appear ordinary, but it may contain invaluable medicinal properties.

A part of the infinite is also infinite. The Govardhana-sila represents Krsna as the master and keeper of cows. Within Govardhana is that mild and soft conception of God the Beautiful. We beg for His mercy, His affection, and His gracious glance upon us.

That may save us from the negative influence of this material environment. When we try to put a stop to our material form of life and take our course towards Godhead, Krsna consciousness, neglecting the imperative duties that are upon us, so many difficulties may come to trouble us, to trap us in our journey towards the ultimate truth. But if we stick to the order of Krsna, He will protect us. Krsna confirms this in Bhagavad-gita:

sarva-dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah

He says, "Abandon all other conceptions of duty and just surrender unto Me. Have no fear. I shall protect you and free you from all sinful reactions that might arise from neglecting your ordinary duties." Different material tendencies and mental impulses may attack us - even Indra himself, the king of heaven and the controller of all ordinary activities, may attack us - but if we are attentive towards our goal, if we are careful to read the order of Krsna, He will protect us in the

shade of His lotus feet. He will give us shelter under the shade of Govardhana Hill, where no Indra will be able to touch our heads. And with full faith that Kṛṣṇa will give us protection, we should try to take shelter under Govardhana Hill and pray: "O Kṛṣṇa, give me protection from all the difficulties that may come to attack me because of my leaving behind my ordinary obligations."

Although many anomalies may try to catch us, Kṛṣṇa will protect us. And in His representation as Govardhana Hill, that wonderful master of the cows will save us from all sorts of difficulties. How is this possible? God works wonders. His ways are unknown and inconceivable.

१२

क्रिश्ण द्रिष्टि पात हेतु शब्दकार्थ योजनम्
स्वोत वाद श्रिन्वहलैक ब्धिति क्रिश्ण वीक्षनम्
स्थूल सूक्ष्म मूल लक्ष्य क्रिश्ण सौख्य सम्भरम्
प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

12

kṛṣṇa-dṛṣṭi-pāta-hetu-śabdakārtha-yojanam
sphoṭa-vāda-śṛṅkhalaika-bhitti-kṛṣṇa-vīkṣaṇam
sthūla-sūkṣma-mūla-lakṣya-kṛṣṇa-saukhya-sambharam
prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Gaurasundar proved that the Supreme Lord's sweet will and well-wishing glance is the background cause governing every sound's intrinsic meaning. The Lord's sanction is the fundamental deciding factor that fixes a sound to its meaning, and not the mundane endeavours of grammarians such as Panini who try to affix specific word meanings with sounds. This is because the purpose of everything animate or inanimate in existence, including such things as sounds and words, is to enhance the beauty of the Lord's charming pastimes.

I offer my obeisances to that beautiful Golden Lord, Gaurangasundar, the divine form of Krishna prema.

१३

प्रेम रत्ना पात्तं ब्रह्मा च्छात्रं काकु कातरम्
 च्छात्रं सना हस्तं तालं कीर्तनाद्यं सन्चरम्
 कृष्णं नाम सीदुहु सिन्दुहु मग्नं दिक् चराचरम्
 प्रेमं दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

13

prema-ranga-pāṭha-bhanga-chāṭtra-kāku-kātaram
 chāṭtra-sanga-hasta-tāla-kīrtanādya-sañcaram
 kṛṣṇa-nāma-sīdhu-sindhu-magna-dik-carācaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

After returning from Gaya where he took initiation from the devotee-ascetic Sri Ishwara Puri the Lord was filled with ecstasy and bliss. In Nabadwip Dham the Lord met again with his students who wanted to continue hearing his amazing discourses about philosophy, Sanskrit and grammar. But spiritual sentiments overwhelming his heart carried Sri Gaurangasundar into states of rapture and joy. The Lord felt he was unable to continue as a teacher and he resigned from that. Nimai's students, deprived to his association, were filled with lamentation. They considered themselves very unfortunate as they would no longer be able to meet with him each day at school. Seeing their grief, the Lord felt compassion for them. He told the boys to chant the names of Hari and began singing "Hari haraye namah, Krishna ..." The boys sang along with him and accompanied the singing by clapping their hands. In the wake of this chanting the animate and inanimate living beings in all ten directions were touched by the holy vibration of the divine names and were penetrated by surging waves of the grand ocean of sweet devotional mellows.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Diksa (spiritual initiation)

Devotee: Can you explain the real meaning of diksa, initiation?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Srila Jiva Goswami has explained this in his Bhakti Sandarbha (868):

*divyam jnanam yato dadyat kuryat papasya sanksayam
tasmad dikseti sa prokta desikais tattva-kovidaih*

Experienced scholars have explained the meaning of diksa, or spiritual initiation, in this way: diksa is the process through which transcendental knowledge is imparted by the preceptor to the disciple. As a result, all the disciple's previous bad tendencies are crushed. Through diksa, all previous commitments are cleared, and one gets the light of new life in relationship with the transcendental Lord. Diksa, or initiation, is a process by which we are given a noble connection with the absolute center and at the same time, our previous commitments are all finished. It is an inner awakening of life that brings divine knowledge. That wealth is there within us, but it is suppressed. Diksa means discovering one's inner wealth, and getting relief from all outward obligations.

With inner awakening, the outward commitments vanish, just as when you reach home, all other arrangements you may have contracted for your comforts are all cut off, for at home you find full comfort. When we are in a foreign land, we may seek the comforts which are supplied in hotels, but when we reach home, the hotel comforts are discarded; we find no more use for them. Sometimes a minor is kidnapped from home. Later, while visiting his native place he may stay in a hotel, but if he suddenly finds his father's house, and returns home, his parents will recognize him and say, "O, my son! You were stolen from us when you were young. We recognize your face. I am your mother, this is your father, here is your sister." Then the hotel is no longer needed. In a similar way, with the inner awakening of the soul, when we return back home, back to Godhead, we will find our comfortable home with Krishna. So, to make a connection with our real home and dispense with our outward links is known as diksa.

Devotee: What is the difference between siksa, or spiritual instruction, and diksa?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Diksa mainly involves initiation into the mantra, the spiritual formula. Other instructions are necessary to substantiate it, to help it become effective. Certain activities are also helpful. These are all parts and parcels of initiation. So, a general direction is given by diksa, but how to substantiate that? Details are necessary. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.5.23-24) it is said,

*sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada-sevanam
 arcanam vandanam dasyam sakhyam atma-nivedanam
 iti pumsarpita visnau bhaktis cen nava-laksana*

"Hearing about Krishna, chanting Krishna's glories, remembering Krishna, serving Krishna's lotus feet, worshiping Krishna's transcendental form, offering prayers to Krishna, becoming Krishna's servant, considering Krishna as one's best friend, and surrendering everything to Krishna - these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service." All these things are advised; a thousand details may be necessary.

Jiva Goswami has written that the name of Krishna is the principle thing in the gayatri mantra. Within the mantra, there are also so many other words, but the name is the most important. If the name of Krishna is taken away, and replaced with some other name, the whole thing will be rotten. This is the decision of Jiva Goswami. The holy name of Krishna is all in all. The holy name of Krishna is there in the gayatri mantra, and so many other words are couched there. But if Krishna's name is taken away and replaced with the name of Siva, then the whole thing will go to Siva. The holy name is the all-important factor.

The holy name of Krishna is so important that even the gayatri mantra may not be necessary. It is said: na ca sat kriya, na dikse na ca purascarya manadilate mantrayam rasana spri hanato sri krsna namatmaka: "One need not undergo all the purificatory processes, or follow the six ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas for pious life; one need not even take initiation into the gayatri mantra. If one simply chants the holy name of Krishna without offense, everything will be successful." The holy name of Krishna is the most important consideration. The gayatri mantra may not even be necessary.

We accept the mantra only to help the nama-bhajana, the worship of the holy name. Otherwise, it may not be necessary at all. It has been judged in such a way. The name alone can do everything for a person. It is full and complete. The mantra helps us to do away with the aparadhas, offenses, and the abhasa, or hazy conceptions in our bhajana. The mantra comes to help us only so far.

An example is given of larger and smaller circles. The holy name of Krishna is the larger circle. It extends from the highest to the lowest. The mantra circle is a smaller circle within the larger circle. The mantra cannot reach to the lowest

point. The holy name can extend itself down to the lowest position. The mantra gives us entrance into liberation, and then the name carries us further. This is the nature of our connection with the mantra and the name.

The name extends to the lowest position, to the candalas and yavanas. Everyone can receive the name. But everyone is not eligible for the gayatri mantra. Only after one has reached a developed stage can the mantra be conferred upon him. And the mantra's jurisdiction will be finished when liberation is attained. In the Chaitanya-charitamrita (Adi. 7.73):

krsna-mantra haite habe samsara mocana
krsna-nama haite pabe krsnera carana

"The Krishna gayatri mantra liberates one from repeated birth and death in this world; the holy name of Krishna gives one shelter at the lotus feet of Krishna." The gayatri mantra helps us achieve liberation, and then the mantra retires. After giving us liberation, the mantra is finished. But the name will continue all along, from the lowest to the highest. In chanting the name, there is no mention of any petition - it is an address only. We should not chant with the mentality that, "I want this." We must simply chant the name spontaneously. That will encourage good will in us. So, because the function of the mantra is limited, but the name is all-important, the nama guru will be honored first, and next, the mantra guru, and then the other Vaisnavas.

१४

आर्य्य दहर्म्म पाल लब्ध् दीक्ष्ह क्रिश्ह कीर्त्तनम्
 लक्ष्ह लक्ष्ह भक्त गीत वाद्य दिव्य नर्त्तनम्
 दहर्म्म कर्म्म नाश दस्यु दुश्हत दुश्हितोद्दहर्म्म
 प्रेम द्दहाम् देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

14

āryya-dharmma-pāla-labdha-dīkṣa-kṛṣṇa-kīrttanam
 lakṣa-lakṣa-bhakta-gīta-vādyā-divya-narttanam
 dharmma-karmma-nāśa-dasyu-duṣṭa-duṣkṛtoddharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Gaurasundara showed honour for the religious traditions of the ancient Aryan civilization of India (sanatana dharma). In this world filled with the darkness of the iron age (kali-yuga), the Lord inaugurated the festival of congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names (sankirtan-yajna) in the island city of Nabadwip Dham, found within the stream of the Ganges. He began this mission of congregational chanting in accordance with the instructions he received from his Guru, Sri Ishwara Puri. The Lord would continually chant Krishna's names. Ever absorbed in his ecstatic dance of divine love, accompanied by the music of the mrdanga and kartals and the sweet singing of thousands of devotees, he eternally sings Krishna's names in great joy in Nabadwip Dham. He is the saviour of sinful and evil minded demons who are responsible for the destruction of religious principles, piety and truthfulness.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Mahaprakasha-lila of Sri Gaurasundara
 from Sri Chaitanya Bhagavat, Madhya Lila, Chapter Nine
 by Sri Vrindavan Das Thakur

Lord Sri Gaura Chandra is the Controller of the Universe. He descended and appeared on earth as the beloved son of Sachi and Jagannatha Mishra. As a young man He accepted the garb of a sannyasi and travelled from place to place telling everyone He met to chant the Holy Name and to live a pious life. He has come into this world not for His own sake but for everyone's benefit.

All glory to the son of Jagannatha Misra and Mother Sachi, and all glory to His sankirtana movement

All glory to Lord Gauranga, the very Life of Lord Nityananda and Gadadhara Pandit. He is the most beloved by Advaita and Srivasa Pandit, Jagadananda Pandit and Haridas Thakur, Vakreswara Pandit and Pundarika Vidyamidhi, Vasudeva and Srigarbha.

Be merciful O Lord! Look upon every living entity graciously. May the Lord and all His associates be glorified for by hearing about the pastimes of Lord Gauranga someone immediately attains the supreme goal of Bhakti, or love of God.

Please listen intently to the narration in Madhya lila because they depict pastimes of Lord Gauranga. Now hear the descriptions of Lord Gauranga's "Mahaparakasha" lila or great revelation, for this fulfills the desire of all Vaishnavas.

The Lord manifested the glorious "Sat Praharia bhava" or the "pastime of the twenty one hour display of devotional emotions". In this pastime He wonderfully showed the devotees His Divine Form and revealed His different incarnations, freely giving away to the gathered devotees His gift of pure love of Godhead. And all the Vaishnavas honored the Lord in a grand bathing ceremony known as "Raja Rajeswar" which can be offered only for the most powerful King of the Universe.

One day Lord Gaurasundar came to Srinivas Pandit's house accompanied by Lord Nityananda, who was beside Himself with joy. Gradually all the Vaishnavas assembled there. Lord Gaurasundara was fully immersed in meditation within Himself. He looked about Him - as a kingly Personality surveys His surroundings with intensely powerful glances. The devotees could perceive the Lord's mood and immediately they started loud kirtana.

On other days the Lord would dance in the ecstasy of a devotee servant of the Supreme Lord, then, changing that mood for a moment, He would reveal His identity as Avatara of this age of Kali and the Omnipotent Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Then again, that mood would then also would quickly change and he would again revert back to the mood of a devotee. But today, to the good fortune

of the assembled devotees, the Lord stood up as if to dance as usual, but instead sat on the throne of Lord Visnu in the temple of Srivas Pandit's house.

On previous occasions the Lord would sit on Lord Visnu's throne immersed in devotional ecstasy, as if unaware of His own conduct. No so today. Today He did not hide His real identity with the cloak of His internal energy but instead He sat on the throne continuously for twenty one hours. The devotees stood in front of Him with folded hands and hearts bubbling with joy. It was a wonderful sight the devotees were fully overjoyed. During the proceedings that occurred on that day, the devotees spontaneously expressed that they felt they were in Vaikuntha - the kingdom of God.

And so it was, the Lord Sri Gaurachandra sat amidst all the devotees, as the Lord of Vaikuntha appearing on Earth for the benefit of the souls in this world, and everyone present became totally free from the influence of the illusory material potency that covers souls in this world.

Lord Gauranga said, "Sing that bathing song". The devotees were very pleased and they began to sing. The Lord gently swayed His head sideways in time with the song and cast His merciful glances towards the devotees. The devotees now could serve the Lord's mood. They realized He had decided to fulfil their inner desire and allow them to perform the 'abhisek' or bathing ceremony for the Deity.

The devotees brought water from the Ganga. First they strained the Ganges water through a cloth. Then they added musk, sandal pasted, saffron and camphor to the water, preparing everything with ecstatic love of the Lord.

They began the ceremony with jubilant shouts and were all chanting appropriate mantras.

Lord Nityananda was the first to pour water on the Lord's head. He constantly repeated the word "Jaya, jaya" as He bathed the Deity (Sri Gauranga) with great pleasure. Other devotees like Advaita Acarya and Srivasa Pandita bathed the Lord, chanting the famous "Purusa Sukta" prayers. The devotees of Lord Gauranga, all well versed in the scriptures and of chanting Vedic hymns, poured water onto the body of the Lord to the accompaniment of Vedic mantras.

Mukunda and others were sweetly singing the bathing ceremony song, while other devotees wept or danced with overwhelming happiness. The wives of Advaita and Srivas and other chaste ladies present there were uluating with joy. The entire assembly was immersed in an ocean of bliss. The Lord of Vaikuntha Lord Gauranga remained seated, and the devotees one by one poured water on His head, bathing the Lord.

Even the demigods came there, not wanting to miss the opportunity to worship the Lord Narayana who was now appearing on Earth in His most merciful incarnation as Kali-yuga-pavana Sri Gaurahari. The gods came there disguised as humans, so as not to be recognized.

Generally, wherever even a drop of water is offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, that also even in meditation, it is sufficient to ward off the punishment given out by the God of death. So what can be said about the good fortune of the people who were able to bathe the Lord directly and who were present there in Nabadwip in person for the maha-abhiseka ceremony of Sri Gauranga.

All the servants and maid servants in Srivasa Pandit's house were busily bringing water for the Lord. One of the maid servants, a pious woman named "Dukkhi" (whose name means "sad"), was one of the water carriers. The Lord saw her enthusiastically engaged in this service and told her, "Bring more, bring more." The lady became filled with joy and Lord was so impressed with her devotional service attitude that He changed her name at that moment to 'Sukhi' or happy. He gave her the indication that He had taken away forever all of her distress.

Having bathed the Lord, accompanied with the chanting of the Vedic mantras, the devotees dried the Lord's body. They dressed Him in fresh new clothes and smeared His transcendental and exquisite body with fragrant sandal wood paste. They cleaned Lord Visnu's throne and arranged everything properly, then the Lord sat back down on the throne which was truly His. Sri Nityananda Prabhu held the umbrella over the Lord's head, while one of the more fortunate devotees began to whisk the Lord with the 'camara' (cow tail whisk). While this was happening, the other devotees collected paraphernalia for offering puja or worship to the Lord. The puja ceremony began and the assembled devotees began to fully worship Him.

The offering tray was packed with caranamrita, fruits, acamani, incense, fragrant oil, a lamp, new clothing, a brahmana's thread etc. As is customary they worshiped Him with sixteen ingredients. Applying sandal wood paste on Tulasi manjari flowers they offered it at His lotus feet. The Gopala mantra consisting of ten syllables was chanted while they offered worship, following strictly the rules of worship. While the puja ceremony was going on, all the devotees were offering their heart felt prayers to Sri Gauranga.

Senior associates of the Lord like Advaita Acarya Prabhu fell before the Lord's feet like sticks and offered full obeisances to Him. All the devotees were experiencing a moment of extreme spiritual love for the Supreme Lord. The tears cascading down their cheeks mingled and flowed like a river. They constantly chanted verses describing the glories of the Lord Gauranga, who is the origin of the Lord Vaikuthapati Narayana Himself, and the Lord heard everything with great satisfaction.

They prayed: "All glory to the Lord of the Universe. Oh Lord, kindly direct Your merciful glance on this world now ablaze with the three fold suffering (birth, death, disease). All glory to the Original cause of everything, the Maintainer of everyone. You have advented in this Kali-yuga age to inaugurate the congregational chanting to the holy name, the yuga-dharma (religious ceremonial practice for the age). You establish the Sanatan Dharma of the Vedas and You are the Protector of the pious people, and You have reappeared on earth in order to protect the pious people. You are the Original Soul named Vishnu who pervades all the fourteen worlds.

"All glory to Lord Gauranga for He is the redeemer of the most fallen souls. He is an ocean of transcendental qualities. He is the Supreme Shelter of the meek and poor. All glory to Lord Gauranga who is Vrajendra nandana Krishna Himself, and who expands to Lord Visnu and lies on the ocean of milk as Ksirodakasayi Vishnu. In his form of Ksirodakasayi Vishnu the Lord expands His presence and appears in the heart of every being as the Monitor and conscience of the living beings.

"All glory to Lord Gauranga who is the Original and Absolute Truth, Who is the inconceivable, unpreceivable Truth (Brahma). He is always transcendently situated. He is the compassionate Supreme Person. All glory to Sri Gauranga, who was born in a family of Brahmanas and Who is the crown jewel of the

brahmana class of people, and Who came into this world with the mission of liberating the entire brahmana section within society. Sri Gauranga is the origin of the Vedic religion, and He is the life and soul of every living entity. All glory to Lord Gauranga who is Krishna Himself, Who saved Arjuna from an inglorious death and gave liberation to the demoness Putana. All glory to Lord Gauranga who never sees the faults of the living entities living in this world of Maya. He is the eternal Lord and husband of Lakshmi the Goddess of fortune.”

With such chosen words the devotees praised the Lord.

The Lord's servitors were floating in an ocean of bliss when they were seeing Lord Gauranga manifest this extraordinary mood. At other times the Lord acted as if He were a devotee of Krishna and the devotees were compelled to respond and reciprocate this mood, treating Him as if He were a devotee. But on this special day the Lord mercifully removed the veil of Yoga-maya (divine illusory spell) from everyone's heart, and instead He allowed the devotees to worship His lotus feet. Some devotees brought sweetly perfumed oil and smeared it on the Lord's lotus feet, other's worshiped Him with an offering of tender tulasi leaves. Again, more devotees came offering precious gems, gold and silver ornaments, and they all paid obeisances at His feet. Many valuable gifts were offered to the Lord. White, blue and bright yellow silken clothes were offered. A gift of precious metal containers were placed in offering at the lotus feet of the Lord. The jewels and gold that were offered and filled the jewel-boxes was amazing to see.

All the household servants in Srivas Pandita's house by dint of serving that pure Vaishnava Srivasa could now directly serve Lord Gaura Chandra's lotus feet. Even Lord Brahma, Lord Siva and Laksmidevi aspire for the opportunity to serve the Lord's holy feet.

They offered many items of worship to the Lord without fear or hesitation, for the Lord was merciful to them and He had removed the sense of reverence from the hearts of the devotees and supplanted that reverence with a mood of intimacy and affection. The devotees brought unhusked rice, tulasi, durba grass, musk, saffron, camphor and many kinds of fruits and fragrant blossoms, as well as sandalwood paste, and they placed these things at His lotus feet. Each devotee worshiped the Lord according to his or her heart's inclination, following different rules of worship.

Then Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Lord of Vaikuntha, exhibited another of His extra ordinary pastimes. He said to the devotees, "Get Me something, for I want to eat" - then He held out His hand. Whatever the devotees offered He ate it.

The different Vaishnavas brought different foods for Him to eat. Banana, mung dhal, yogurt, sweet condensed milk, butter, milk. They placed these foods into the Lord's hands and He ate everything. Some of the devotees hurried to the market and rushed back with choice delicacies. They offered the Lord coconuts, milk sweets in huge quantities, blackberries, green melons and sugar cane. Some even brought water from the Ganga. The Lord ate everything. Seeing the Lord happily eating everything they offered, they gave more helpings of other delicious foods again and again. Hundreds of devotees had now gathered, and they brought hundreds of containers of Ganges water to the Lord. The Lord, Who is the Greatest of the Mystics, drank all this water.

The Lord ate hundreds of barrels of yogurt, sweet condensed milk, fresh milk, together with hundreds of bunches of bananas. He ate huge amounts of 'mung dhal' and heaps of milk sweet preparations, camphor and betel. Like Krishna in His pastime of Giriraj Goverdhan, where Krishna ate mountains of food, Lord Gauranga ate all the food brought by the devotees, eating fruits and nuts and everything else instantly, to the amazement of the gathered devotees. The Lord contentedly ate everything offered to Him and in turn He revealed to the devotees all the details of their devotees past life. When the devotees heard their individual stories they remembered their earlier days and fell to the ground in ecstasy.

The Lord addressed Srivasa Pandit, "Do you remember, you used to hear lectures on the Srimad Bhagavatam at Devananda Pandita's house. Every line of the Bhagavatam is saturated with the nectar of divine love of Godhead, and so your heart melted on hearing those recitations of Bhagavatam. You cried loudly and one day you fell unconscious onto the ground. The ignorant students there, not understanding that you were in a trace, and not knowledgeable in the matters of "Bhakti yoga", could not understand the reason for your extraordinary behavior.

You were engrossed within Yourself in the ecstasy of love of Krishna, oblivious of the external world, so you did not know that they had lifted you carried you out of their house. Devananda Pandita, their teacher, witnessed the entire happening without dissuading his students from carrying you outside. Since he

himself was inexperienced in the science of Krishna consciousness, it is to be expected that his students will also be like him. On waking and finding yourself outside on the street you picked yourself up and returned home feeling sad.

Your sadness persisted and so you preferred to be alone. You desired to read the Bhagavatam again. Seeing your sorrowful state I descended from Vaikuntha into your heart and made you weep with the ecstatic emotions of your love for Me. You experienced happiness again reading the Bhagavatam and were showering the place where you were sitting with your tears".

When Srivasa Pandita heard this he was overcome with emotion and he fell to the ground crying and breathing fast and heavily. In this way the Lord spoke to Advaita Acarya Prabhu and different devotees and brought to them recollections of their earlier days. He submerged the devotees in an ocean of bliss while He sat on His throne chewing betel. The devotees danced and performed kirtan singing, "Jaya Sachinananda", or "all glory to the son of Mother Sachi".

Seeing that some of his devotees in Nabadwip district were absent from that gathering, the Lord called for them to be brought before Him. He put His hand out and would say to every devotee, "Give Me something to eat", and then He ate it all. The Lord said to one devotee, "Do you remember that night I came to you, while a doctor sat next to you on your bed. It was I who had cured your fever". On hearing this from the Lord the devotee fell down overwhelmed by uncontrolled spiritual emotions.

Seeing Gangadas the Lord said, "Can you remember that night you were escaping from the Muslim king fearing that he would capture you? Your whole family was with you and when you arrived at the ferry wharf there were no boats. You were in a great dilemma. The night was ending and dawn was coming, and still no boats were in sight. You began weeping in anxiety. You shuddered at the thought that the Muslims might molest the ladies in your family in your presence, and were considering that it might be better for all of you to drown yourselves in the Ganges. Your spirits lifted, seeing an approaching boat. Then you spoke to Me, the boatman with affection saying, "My dear brother, please take me across, I surrender my body, wealth, life, everything to you. I solely depend upon you. Here is a couple of rupees for your endeavor, take me and my family to safety. Then I ferried you and your family across, and afterwards returned to My eternal Vaikuntha abode in the spiritual sky. Gangadas was lifted up on waves of bliss

and ecstasy when he heard this from the Lord. Such are the wonderful pastimes of Lord Gaurasundara. The Lord continued, "Do you recall that incident Gangadas. You were so worried. So worried. And I came to your rescue and brought you across". Gangadas, unable to contain himself further, fell to the ground rolling in ecstasy.

Lord Gauranga, the golden Lord of Vaikuntha, was sitting on His throne. His body was covered with sandalwood paste and was beautifully decorated with fragrant flower garlands. One of His dear servants was fanning Him. Another is arranging His hair. Some other devotee is preparing betel and offering it to Him, and many of them were dancing in ecstasy all around Him. How the entire day passed and how the darkness of night time came along no-one noticed. Realizing that it was night, the devotees became busy lighting lamps which they offered in worship at the Lord's lotus feet. They began to perform kirtana playing kartal, gongo, conch shell, the mrdanga drum and different string instruments. The Lord remained sitting. He was in a benevolent mood but He remained silent in spite of the devotees excitement and activities.

Devotees offered different kinds of flowers at His lotus feet and they prostrated themselves before Him saying, 'O Lord protect me'. Some devotees prayed to the Lord with great humility while others were singing loudly in praise of the Lord. The sound of jubilant shouts and cries was the only thing anyone could hear. Everyone present experienced such an indescribable and wonderfully elated feeling that everyone joining in that assembly felt as if they had entered into the Vaikunthas. In this way the Lord exhibited a mood of Supreme opulence while all the devotees stood circling the Lord with folded hands in reverence.

Lord Gaurasundara behaved in a casual manner with His disciples were taking placing His lotus feet and placing His feet on their heads. In this manner He performed His transcendental pastimes at Nabadwip Dham, in the assembly of the many gods who had been born on earth as brahmanas and Vaishnavas. Lord Gaurasundara was in His most generous mood. He was ready to give boons and blessings to His devotees, and to spread the glories of Hari-Nama sankirtan throughout the world. The devotees remained surrounding Him with folded hands. The Lord showered His causeless mercy on everyone as He performed this pastime of twenty one hour ecstasy, or Mahaprakasha-lila.

१५

म्लेच्छं राज नाम बाद्हं ब्रह्म कीर्तिं ब्रह्मजन्मम्
 लक्ष्मं लक्ष्मं दीपं नैशं कीर्तिं कल्हं कीर्तनम्
 श्रीं भिदन्ता तालं वाद्यं त्रितयं काजिं निस्तरम्
 प्रेमं दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौरं सुन्दरम्

15

mleccha-rāja-nāma-bādha-bhakta-bhīti-bhañjanam
 lakṣa-lakṣa-dīpa-naiśa-koṭi-kaṇṭha-kīrttanam
 śrī-mṛdanga-tāla-vādyā-ṇṛtya-kāji-nistaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Chand Kazi, the Muslim governor of Nabadwip, banned the performance of congregational chanting of Krishna's holy names on the streets of the city. The Lord then led an evening chanting procession of hundreds of thousands of devotees carrying lanterns and torches. Millions of people joined the procession, their voices singing the holy names while they danced to the rhythm of drums, cymbals and other instruments. The Lord brought this huge procession to the door of the governor who was hiding in his house in a fearful state of mind. Sri Gaurasundara commanded Chand Kazi to come out and meet with him. Then when the Kazi emerged Sri Gaurasundara hugged him. Sri Gaurasundara told Chand Kazi that the congregational chanting of the holy names of Krishna is not a politically inspired movement but a non-sectarian spiritual movement. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Kazi-damana-lila of Sri Gaurasundara Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata, Madhya Lila Chapter Thirteen by Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur

One day the Muslim magistrate, the Kazi, was passing near to a place where the devotees were chanting the Lord's Holy Names. He heard the tumult of singing of the Lord's name accompanied by drums, cymbals and conchshell. He tried to remember the instruction in his own scripture about practice of other religions. The Kazi cried out, "Catch all of them, let us see what your teacher Nimai Pandit does to stop me."

All the devotees fled in fear of Muslim fanatics. The Kazi's men went about breaking the drums and beating the devotees, spreading terror. He said, "It seems that there is sudden outburst of Hindu religious activities nowadays in Nadia, so I will punish the culprits severely. Since it is already late and getting dark I am letting you off but if I see this again I will convert all of you to Islam."

The evil Kazi would send his men everyday patrolling the town looking for any kirtan. The devotees became despondent and they went into hiding fearing violent retaliation from the Kazi and his men.

The envious atheist brahmanas were siding with the Kazi. They commented, "God's name should be chanted in the mind. Which scripture enjoins that one to make a hue and cry in chanting God's name? None. This is a correct punishment they have received for transgressing the Vedic injunctions. They have no fear of flouting the social norms. That Nimai Pandit who acts so proud will now be frightened by the Kazi's power, and that Nityananda who roams about everywhere will soon see the end of all his fun. They call us atheists for speaking out the truth, but now at long last Nadia will be rid of these charlatans."

The devotees did not protest against the Kazi ban out of fear of violence. They went to the Lord and reported to Him, "We have stopped our kirtan out of fear for the Kazi, whose men in hundreds search the streets and houses. We will have to leave Nabadwip and settle elsewhere, we have come to tell You this."

When Lord Gauranga heard that someone was trying to stop the sankirtan movement He became infuriated. He looked awesome, almost like Lord Siva at the time of the cosmic annihilation. He roared loudly like the rumbling of thunder and the devotees became afraid of this sudden change in the Lord. They held their ears as if begging forgiveness from the Lord for a mistake they had not committed.

The Lord said, "Nityananda, be prepared, go immediately to all the Vaishnavas and assemble then on the streets. I shall bring out a kirtan party and take it all over Nabadwip. I will see what anyone can do to Me. You will see how I burn the Kazi's house down. Today I shall shower incessant rains of love of Godhead on My devotees. Today the atheist's will face the final hour. So do not waste a moment My brothers, go and deliver this message to everyone. Tell them that if they are desirous of seeing Krishna's mystic potency in action then let them bring

a flaming torch with them. I will smash the Kazi's palace and I will do kirtan all along. The entire creation is full of My devotees and when I am present there among them what is there to fear! Go and put a stop to your anguish. Come and assemble in the early afternoon after lunch."

The devotees dispersed immediately, each going his own way in great anticipation, not caring about eating or anything else. Excited talks filled every home: "Nimai Pandit will take out a sankirtan and dance in the streets of Nabadwip."

For the many thousands who were lamenting for so long that they could not see Nimai Pandit's dancing this news was a cause of great rejoicing. Everyone prepared their own torch. Even if the father had made a torch the son made his own. They competed with each other to make the biggest torch. Huge barrels of oil were kept in readiness. Nabadwip in those days was very thickly populated. The constant flow of people with torches poured out of the houses onto the streets. Who could count the millions of torches. The women, children, and old men were excited with great anticipation. Slowly the clusters of devotees moved towards Nimai Pandit's house at Mayapur.

When Lord Chaitanya heard that all the Vaishnavas had assembled at His behest and were at His door steps. He went to meet them and began to organise them in groups.

Advaita Acarya was to head up a group and was the chief dancer, supported by a kirtan group. In another group Haridas was the dancer and he was also backed by a kirtan group. Yet another group was to be led by their main dancer Srivas Pandit. The Lord's eyes fell on Nityananda and immediately Nityananda Prabhu said, "I will not leave Your side My Lord. My only duty is to always be near You. I can never leave Your lotus feet fixed in My heart. What power do I possess to dance independently, away from You. My devotional service to You is I am always with You."

When Sri Chaitanya saw the streams of ecstasy flowing from Nityananda's eyes He embraced Him and kept Him near Him. In this way each had his desire fulfilled. Some went off with one or another group while others stayed close to the Lord, dancing and singing.

Now please listen attentively to the description of this "nagar- kirtan" for this will cut asunder the bonds of karmic reactions. Here is the list of some of the main devotees who came. Gadadhara Pandit, Vakresvara, Murari, Srivas Pandit, Gopinath, Jagadisa, Vipra Gangadas, Ramai, Govindanandana, Chandrasekhara, Vasudeva, Srigarbha, Mukunda, Sridhara, Govinda, Jagadananda, Nandan Acarya, Suklambara. The devotees of Lord Chaitanya are innumerable and I do not know all their names; Vedavyas will reveal all their names in the future in the Puranas. It is not humanly possible to describe how the Lord danced along with all His associates of different categories.

The sankirtan pastimes of the Lord is unique, never was such pastimes ever revealed before in any other incarnation. As the kirtan picked up energy the Lord's joy also increased. The devotees were carried in waves of sublime joy. The Lord and husband of the goddess of fortune was dancing on Nabadwip's streets and anyone who saw Him became free from all sorrows. Soon it was sunset but the devotees were totally immersed in the kirtan oblivious of the material realm. Millions of men, women, and children lined the streets standing in doorways seeing the moving mass of men and their tumultous singing of the Lord's holy name which echoed and filled the cosmos. And above this tumult the Lord's own thunderous voice rang out loud and clear. The devotees replied with equal strength chanting Lord Hari's name. Then as if by previous arrangement all the torches were lit at the same time like magic. Millions of flaming torches lit up the darkened sky, matched by millions of hearts kindled by the magic of sublime bliss. Words fail to describe the marvellous sight. One could be easily confused whether it was a full moon night or broad daylight or that then again it was Krishna Himself Who had descended now in the form of His Brahmajyoti.

The Lord again called out loud the name of Lord Hari and the devotees became attentive. They surrounded the Lord with the kirtan. All the devotees were decorated with flower garlands around their neck, their bodies smeared with sandalwood paste and scented vermilion powder. Each one had some musical instrument or the other in their hands, and everyone was looking more powerful than a lion. The Lord looked around to see His devoted servitors eagerly waiting to render Him any service. He began to dance lifting the devotees into soaring heights of ecstasy. Everyone began chanting loudly and whoever saw the Lord's moonlike beautiful face was released from searing pain of material existence.

The Lord's charming looks overshadowed the attractiveness of millions of cupids. I am at a loss to find the appropriate similes to describe the Lord's beauty yet I venture to do so only by His mercy alone, otherwise who can dare to attempt such an impossible task. He glowed like a mountain of gold, His body being smeared with sandal paste. He sometimes looked like the rising full moon. His curly dark tresses were decorated with the fragrant Malati garlands; a sweet smile clung intimately to His lips that can win the hearts of all the gods. The clear markings of sandalwood tilak with a red dot of Vermillion adorned His beautiful broad forehead. He raised His arms up in the sky chanting the name of Hari and danced; the knee-length flower garland around His neck swayed with each movement. His upraised arms glistened like fine tapering pillars of gold, His body became drenched with the incessant flow of ecstatic tears from His lotus petal eyes. As the ecstatic feelings increased the hairs of His body stood on end like the ever fresh Kadamba flower. The moist reddish lips looked so exquisite, and when parted they revealed a symmetrical set of pearl like white teeth; the long arched eyebrows languished almost all the way up to the beginning of His ears. His strong shoulders shamed the king of elephants and His chest was broad and full. The brahman thread hung loosely across His chest. Lakshmi devi and Tulasi devi are constantly praying for the shelter of His lotus feet. That Supreme Lord wears His fine and clean clothes very artistically. His upturned nose is aristocratic and the sinewy tendons of His neck give the impression of being the neck of the lion, the king of the forest, strong and powerful. He towers over the others, His long body well formed and proportionate like a mountain of gold. Everyone looking at Him commented on His divine and beautiful presence. The millions who milled around for this momentous occasion were very fortunate and in spite of their large number they still all received the Lord's benedictions by being able to see the Lord's exquisite transcendental face. They simply stared at Him irresistibly, drawn to His beauty, and they exclaimed out loud the Lord's name each time uncontrollable, their emotions welling within their hearts.

The citizens had nicely decorated their doorways with banana trees, water pots, mango leaves, and green coconuts. The ghee lamp flickered in every house and an offering plate sat on the altars with yogurt, grains, and Dhruva grass. All this happened as if at the command of some unseen voice. Out on the street the men, women and children joined the congregation, all intoxicated with sublime joy, oblivious to every other care. Seeing the carefree citizens leaving their house unguarded a thief thought to himself, "This is good opportunity for me to steal the people's belongings." But as time passed and the chanting entering his ears took

affect, the thief got rid of his stealing tendencies and he too joined in with the others, joyously chanting Lord Hari's sweet transcendental name.

The streets were strewn with puffed rice and coins thrown by the citizens as they watched the chanting procession passing by. Then these people also themselves joined the procession, and so the marchers quickly swelled in numbers. One should not consider these descriptions as exaggerations. Such happenings are common place when the Supreme Lord is present. When Lord Krishna was in Dvaraka, it is described in the Srimad Bhagavatam that in a twinkling of an eye He made nine hundred thousand palaces appear, all bedecked with jewels and marble. Again in the Harivamsa it is described that when Lord Krishna was having water sports with the Yadus in the salt water ocean surrounding Dvaraka the entire ocean in a moment turned nectarean sweet. And now that very same Supreme Lord is almost unconscious with sublime bliss dancing and chanting, so that naturally all auspicious happenings are occurring.

The ocean of people now surged forward in slow fluid motion like the Ganga's current that flowed besides them. They all danced and chanted, surrounding the dancing golden form of the Lord. Advaita Acarya, Haridas Thakura, Srivas Pandita and other senior associates of the Lord led huge groups of dancing and chanting devotees, everyone exulting in the bliss of the Lord's presence. Those who could not sing were now singing with sweet melodious voices. The Lord was surrounded by the best singers like Murari, Mukanda Datta, Ramai, Govinda, Vakreswar, Vasudeva and others. Lord Nityananda and Gadadhara Pandit danced on either side of the Lord, who was submerged in divine bliss. And always the dancing form of the Lord brought wonder and exhilaration to the hearts of all those who beheld His golden form.

This was a magnificent sight. The dancers moved forward in rhythmic motions and the millions of burning torches were also in motion, their licking flames animated in a passionate dance. It was night, but the dancing figure of the Lord was clearly visible as if bathed in autumn full moonlight. Sometimes His body was covered with shining dust particles and at other times He bathed His transcendental form in the cascading tears of ecstasy. The different ecstatic symptoms appeared in His body - sometimes shivering, sometimes profuse perspiration. Again at times there was horripilation, His form changing like the seasons. The sound of the Lord's name reverberated throughout the universe,

"Hari Haraya nama Krishna Yadavaya namah, Gopal Govinda Ram Sri Madhusudana", "Hari Rama, Rama Hari".

Some devotees danced on their own but there were many large groups of devotees dancing together keeping time with clapping hands. Another wonderful sight was those devotees who were carrying torches and oil containers together. Nabadwip was ringing with sounds of sublime jubilation, as if the Lord's spiritual abode Vaikuntha had descended, and the residents of Nabadwip acquired the same characteristics as the residents of Vaikuntha. They all manifested four-arms but because they were so engrossed in the ecstasy of chanting and dancing that they did not even notice this divine transformation on their person. The ever increasing bliss of Vaikuntha was now here.

As they passed by the bank of the Ganga, Lord Chaitanya dancing in the midst looked like Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaj; a flute in His hand and the garland of wild flowers around His neck swayed.

The devotees had never experienced the ecstasy of such a massive congregational chanting. They forgot their bodily identity, their tribulation. They sang and danced and rolled on the ground. Many persons became emboldened and made their views heard to the public. One said, "Where did the rascal Kazi go now, if I just find him I will sever his head." Others shouted out aloud the names of certain atheistic persons and beat the ground, as if sealing their fate with a stroke, some of them even ran helter skelter trying to locate them. There was no counting the number of people singing, or how many were playing on the Mrdanga drums. Nabadwip was flooded with the nectarean showers of love of Godhead. So much so that even the eternal residents of Vaikuntha were hankering for this bliss. Even Lord Ananta, Lord Siva and Lord Brahma experienced this kind of joy. Sublime bliss had descended over the entire planet as the Lord danced with His associates and devotees, and there was no place for anything inauspicious or impure. This was the Lord's first major *nagar-sankirtan*.

The procession moved on but no one knew where they were going. There was just one resounding thundering sound: the Lord's name piercing the coverings of the material world. The demigods accompanied by their associates came to see the Lord. When they saw Him they, like the humans, also became overwhelmed with transcendental joy. They mingled in with the crowd dressed as humans to avoid detection and with joy joined in, singing and dancing. All the demigods

were present, Brahma, Siva, Varuna, Kuvera, Indra, Yamaraj, Soma etc. They became aware that everyone present was experiencing transcendental ecstasy, so they went along with the devotees, wanting more of the Lord's association. Thus the humans and the demigods were chanting the Lord's holy name together.

As the procession passed the uncountable houses of Nabadwip, all nicely decorated, and the market places and town squares, one could understand that Nabadwip was a very well populated and opulent town. It was impossible to count the people that lived there. It seemed that because the Supreme Lord advented here that He had arranged for many people to live here and participate in His sankirtan movement. The number of ladies who were chanting were also so numerous that counting them would be futile.

Everyone who saw the Lord dancing and chanting like a golden flash could not contain their hearts and emotions. Even those with hearts of stone were moved to tears which were falling to the ground, seeing how the Lord showered His causeless mercy on everyone. And also hearing the sighs and sobs of sublime ecstasy of the devotees.

As the Lord danced, repeating over and over again Lord Hari's name, the garland of flower swayed wildly. His beauty was breathtaking. The way the brahman thread hung carelessly over His shoulders, the dhoti nicely pleated and tucked in place neatly, His golden frame covered with fine glimmering dust. Tears flowed unrestrained from His lotus eyes like the languid flow of the Mandakini Ganga of the heavenly planets. Who would have liked to see the moon after having seen the blooming lotus face of the Lord. As some of the tear drops clung to the cleft of His fine nose, they shone like a string of white pearls. His glossy black locks entwined with the garlands around His head made a fine sight.

The devotees prayed, "O Lord please grant us this one desire that we may hold within our hearts this pastime birth after birth." The devotees were asking in this manner for benedictions from the Lord, while the Lord continued His extraordinary dancing pastime surrounded by His intimate associates. The Lord knew how to inspire devotees to come and join, and He danced madly, always reciprocating the mood and movement of the devotees. The Lord of Vaikuntha danced as the devotees sang, "Come and sing 'Hari, Hari' all of you, fear not, for the Holy name will deliver you from death even though not chanted purely by you."

Lord Visvambhar the Lord of the universe danced along the bank of the Ganga. The devotees eagerly covered themselves with the earth that was left in the impressions of His lotus feet. Wonderful ecstatic symptoms manifested on His person and tears like nectar cascaded from His eyes. With a voice like the rumble of thunder He chanted Lord Hari's name. Smiling sweetly He raised His arms and sang. His golden form was much more enchanting than Cupid. Charming and dressed, His black curly hair was decorated with fresh and fragrant flower garlands; such beauty sent the mind reeling as if when a person is afflicted by the five amorous arrows of Cupid. In complete bliss Lord Visvambhar moved about in a restless dance, He was intoxicated with the holy name. His body and limbs were perfectly shaped and beautiful being nicely smeared with sandal paste. The garland around His neck matched His love agitated movements. The arch of His eyebrows were like Cupid's bow shooting arrows of enchantment. His teeth were white and glistening like pearls, His benign face was an ocean of mercy.

How can I describe the many hundreds of ecstatic emotions that manifested in Him. Sometimes tears, or shivering, or perspiration. At times He bent His body in three places just like Krishna and played the flute with His fingers. He moved about like a maddened elephant, He was in the center of every eye. His brahman thread decorated His broad chest as if Ananta Sesha had taken that thin form to serve His Lord. Lord Nityananda and Gadadhara and all the other intimate devotees danced by His side. Each time they looked at the Lord they saw the Lord smiling back at them.

Lord Siva, by chanting the name of his Lord Rama, becomes mad and goes about naked. That same Lord is now walking on the streets of Nabadwip performing congregational chanting. Laksmidevi, the goddess of fortune, is hankering always to touch and dress this Supreme Lord's black curly locks, and is so attracted by His dress. That self same Supreme Lord is so engrossed in singing and dancing that He rolls in the dust in ecstasy. Following Him are His devotees, carrying millions of flaming torches, lighting up the world like the full moon, and not a soul could refrain from chanting the Lord's holy name. This was such a marvel that Nabadwip had never witnessed, the residents looked at each other and chanted "Hari, Hari."

Lord Nityananda was always by the Lord's side, knowing Lord Visvambhar's every mood, so, whenever the Lord swooned in ecstasy, He held out His hands to hold Him. As He held Him this time Visvambhar slowly sat down in a

meditative pose and clapping His hand gleefully began to loudly chant "Hari, Hari". Then He began to speak with childlike innocence, "I am the Supreme Lord Narayana, I killed that demon Kamsa and I deceived Bali Maharaj. I constructed that bridge over the ocean to Sri Lanka and killed the demon Ravana, I am Lord Ramachandra." In this manner He revealed His real Supreme identity. Not everyone could understand this esoteric truth for it is inconceivable to the human mind. And in the next moment to increase their confusion the Lord changed His mood completely and said with utmost humility and meekness, "O Lord please grant Me devotion at Your lotus feet."

Whichever way the Lord acted were all so mind robbing, even when He put His toe to His mouth. The Lord of Vaikuntha, Lord Visvambhar was dancing all over the Nabadwip town. This town is actually the Svetadvipa of the spiritual world which will be later explained in the Vedas. Amidst the mrdanga drum, conchshell and cymbals whose number is countless, and the chanting of the holy name, He danced in ecstasy.

All glory to the congregational chanting, all glory to Lord Visvambhar, all glory to the devotees of the Lord, whichever way I look I see Lord Visvambhar drowning everyone in the nectar ocean of love of Godhead.

The procession sometimes moved fast and sometimes much slower, depending on how long the Lord danced in one place. The chanting was jubilant and echoed in the spiritual abode of Vaikuntha. The Lord, the cynosure of everyone, moved about like a mad lion intoxicated with the Holy name. The procession passed many bathing places and proceeded towards Simulia. No one was tired, millions were singing and dancing and a million flaming torches made it difficult to discern whether it was midday or night. The people welcomed the procession with flowers and doorway decorations. The demigods rained a confetti of fragrant flowers. Mother Earth was thrilled with ecstasy as the Lord walked and danced. She wanted the Lord to walk on a soft surface so she had collected strewn flowers and placed them on His path.

Srivas, Advaita and Haridas were dancing in groups of their own, going ahead of Lord Visvambhar. As the procession entered each new locality people left their homes and ran to see the Lord. They forgot all other duties and relatives. They were all eager to see that beautiful moonlike face of the Supreme soul of the entire creation, without consciously realizing they were all being drawn into this

congregational chanting. Without being aware, they were all becoming intoxicated with holy name of Krishna. They began manifesting symptoms of supramundane joy. Some rolled on the ground, some made sounds with their mouth as if playing a musical instrument. Others were embracing anyone they met. Some were offering prostrated obediencies, falling to the ground like a rod, and there were others who were catching the devotees feet and simply crying in ecstasy.

One could hear many comments from different people. Someone said, "I am this Nimai Pandit. I have been assigned to deliver the world." Another commented, "I am a Vaishnava from Svetadvipa." Yet another remarked, "I am an eternal resident of Vaikuntha." Again someone said, "Where is that rascal Kazi. I will crush his head if I could lay my hands on him."

Incited by such comments some ran to try to capture an atheist and climbed up a tree and then jumped down angrily shouting, "I am death to twelve atheists." Another said, "Can you hear me O God of Death! Tell me where is your son, the Sungod?" The Lord of Vaikuntha appearing as Sachi's son is now here chanting and dancing. The floodgates of the Holy name were flung open by Him. The Holy names which gave the God of Death Yamaraj the name Dharmaraj or the upholder of religious principles, and the Holy name that saved the worst of sinners Ajamila from the jaws of doom, was now being freely distributed by the Lord Himself, and those who could not chant the name could at least hear it chanted and reap the transcendental benefits. Chitragupta, the compiler of man's good and evil deeds in life, has to be immediately informed that his records of evil deeds have to be thrown away. I cannot be blamed if I take stern action against him if he disobeys since now every living entity is delivered.

That Holy name has converted Varanasi into one of the most important places of pilgrimage because Lord Siva is constantly chanting that Holy name of Krishna. This Holy name is always chanted by the purest of devotees who are the eternal residents of the spiritual abode. Lord Siva has become worshippable by all the demigods and humans because he is relishing at every moment the sweet nectar of the Holy name. This very name is now being heard by every living entity. So the devotees warned all the atheists that if they do not discard their evil ways and take up the chanting of the Holy name, and the worship of Lord Visvambhar, then they will destroy them. The devotees loudly challenged the atheists to now come forward and speak against the chanting of Krishna's name. The agitated devotees

beat the earth with their fists in great force as if beating to a pulp a recalcitrant atheist. The effects of chanting the Holy name had so divinely maddened them that they were not aware of what they did or said.

When the atheists saw that citizens of Nabadwip had all become mad with ecstasy they became filled with hate and envy. They got together and began conspiring. They said, "If the Kazi comes right now then I would like to see where that Nimai Pandit will run to. What will happen to all their fanfare dancing and singing. Where will they hide their banana trees, mango leaves and rest of the decorations. As soon as Kazi hears their great commotion and sees their burning torches he will immediately come. They will have to jump into the Ganges to escape his wrath." One of them said, "Then I will place myself near to a group and in the stampede I will tie their necks together." Another said, "Then let us go and inform the Kazi." Someone objected to this saying, "I see no logic in doing that." Another made his point strongly, "I can see only one logical thing to do, that is let us go all together to those sentimentalists and loudly shout that 'the Kazi and his men are here', then they will quickly disperse." In this way the atheists were eating their jealous hearts out while the devotees floated on clouds of ecstatic chanting and dancing.

The devotees were looking effulgent. They were decorated with sandalwood paste and flower garlands. They were so fully engrossed in the Holy name that they became oblivious to everything. The sankirtan proceeded towards Simulia. As the devotees chanted and danced the Lord also chanted and danced right in their midst. the activities of devotees increased the Lord's ecstasy. No one could imagine how much water was contained in the Lord's lotus eyes. Incessant tears cascaded in rivulets of pure nectarean water. Sometimes shivering overcame Him and He lay on the ground. Even Nityananda Prabhu was lamenting because He could not hold Him still. And when at the pinnacle of ecstasy He fell unconscious, then no force of life was found in Him for a long time. This was the wonder of wonders.

Excited talks went around amongst the citizens. They said, "This person must be the Supreme Lord Narayan Himself." Another said, "He is so much like Narada or Prahlad or even Sukadeva Goswami." "Whoever He may be, He is certainly not an ordinary human being."

The more critical and calculating ones said, "He is indeed a great devotee." Each one commented according to the level of one's understanding. Lord Nimai was oblivious of anything. He was engrossed in the ecstasy of the Holy name and as He lifted His arms chanting "Hari, Hari!" everyone around, by hearing the Lord, felt irresistibly drawn to Him. They all echoed loudly the Lord's name, following Him. Whichever direction the Lord chose to go, the entire congregation moved that way. The Lord was now heading towards the Kazi's house. The sound of chanting and revelry became clearly audible to the inmates of Kazi's palace.

When Chand Kazi heard the loud clamour of chanting he enquired, "Can you hear that sound of music and singing? Is that a marriage party or is it some weird incantations of strange beings. Have they disobeyed my orders and again started their Hindu practices out in the streets? Go quickly and find out all the details. After you return with information I shall personally go." Kazi's spy left immediately and arrived at the scene of the massive congregational kirtan. The spy was overawed at the sight of the huge mass of people shouting, "Kill the Kazi." Murmuring verses from the Koran for protection the spy fled in terror.

The spy came running to the Kazi and spoke rapidly in gulps, "What are we doing here, let us quickly escape. That Nimai Acarya is coming with thousands and thousands of men. They are carrying thousands and thousands of flaming torches, and all are singing their Hindu God's name. The citizens have decorated their houses and doorways, welcoming this immense and incredible procession. The roads are covered with flower petals and puffed rice. The sound of their singing is so loud that I felt that my eardrums will burst. I have never seen such a sight. Even the coming of our royal monarch never draws such incredulous crowds. Nimai is their leader dancing in the middle and everyone is simply following Him. The singers we had attacked the other day are also there. They are all shouting, "Kill the Kazi". And Nimai is the gangleader who is stirring them up. I wonder why this brahmana fellow Nimai weeps so much. The tears spout out like two rivers."

Another spy replied, "I think He may have some relative somewhere. So He is crying because He is missing him." The other replied, "I am afraid to even look at Him, He looks like He is coming to gobble you up." Kazi said, "Is that really Nimai Pandit? Maybe He is going to get married. I cannot imagine that anyone will try to disregard my orders. If they do, then I will convert them to Islam." As they were discussing the sound of the kirtan came closer and closer.

The huge mass of the chanting congregation arrived in the locality of Kazi's palace. The jewel amongst them all, Lord Visvambhar, led them up dancing. The sound of their chanting boomed throughout the entire universe, echoing in the vaults of heaven, earth and hell. The chanting became unbearably loud for the Kazi and his men, and they made haste to escape fearing the worst for them, like mice running for their life from the snake's mouth. But in the commotion and bustle they were confused and they lost the way. Many of the Kazi's men spread open their rolled up head cloth and hung it over their heads, so as not to be recognized, and joined in with the dancing, but with a thumping heart. The bearded compatriots of the Kazi hung their heads down so that their easily recognizable Muslim beard would remain unexposed. There were so many people that it would be impossible for one to know everyone by face, and besides that the people were so excited that they were not aware of even their own persons. Everyone was lost in dancing and singing.

Lord Visvambhar stood before the Kazi's palace doors. His rising anger was visible. With a voice like thunder He said, "Where is that mischief monger, Kazi, bring him right here to Me this minute and I shall cut his head off. I will obliterate the entire Yavana race from the face of this earth like I have previously done. Break open and smash everything. Break it! Break it!"

These were the orders of the Supreme Lord and who could disobey Him. The congregation was already exuberant and inebriated with the association of Lord Gauranga and the Holy name so such a command from the Lord was immediately put into action with great enthusiasm.

They ransacked the entire property. They went through the house and indiscriminantly broke anything that came their way. The garden lay limp and ravaged as if after a hurricane. Banana trees lay uprooted. Broken branches hung from mango trees. The flower garden was stamped to the ground. Lakhs and lakhs of people overran the palace rooms and the grounds and all the time the congregation was chanting, "Hari! Hari!" The Holy name was their constant companion. They punctuated every move with Lord Hari's name.

Lord Visvambhar then said, "Now burn down everything. Put fire in the house, let the Kazi and all his men burn to death. I want to see what his king will do to Me. I also want to see who has the audacity to check Me, in my Mission to spread this Krishna kirtan. The God of death, time and death, all are servants of My

devoted servitors. They are created by my glance over material nature. I have advented mainly to propagate the congregational chanting of the Holy name and if any one so much as tries to cause obstruction then I will annihilate him. And even if the most lowly sinner participates in the chanting of the Lord's name then he shall be remembered by Me and saved. On the other hand even if a person is performing austerity, renunciation, Vedic studies or yoga yet he does not join in the sankirtan movement then he will certainly perish. So do not fear now, put fire to the house. I will bring about the total devastation of the entire race of Yavanas."

When they saw the Lord's wrath the devotees fell on their knees and raising their arms prayed to Him, "One of Your principle expansions is Lord Sankarsan, He never manifests His anger untimely; when the time is ready for the destruction of the material world then Rudra appears as Lord Sankarsana's incarnation and expansion. And after Rudra completes the work of annihilation or "pralaya" he again returns into Your transcendental body. The work of annihilation is carried out by the expansion of Your expansion, so if you are angry then who can check Your wrath. The Vedas glorify You as "angerless and eternally blissful". Even Lord Brahma never attracts Your ire; creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world are simply Your transcendental pastimes. Today You have sufficiently chastised that Kazi and if next time he does anything again then You can destroy him. All glory to Lord Visvambhar, the Supreme Lord of all Lords; all glory to Lord Gaurasundar the Lord of the Universe, the Lord of Lakshmidivi, and who rests on Lord Ananta Sesha."

Lord Chaitanya smiled after listening to their choice prayers and then began to dance and chant with everyone. He met the Kazi and the Kazi begged forgiveness. The Kazi was justly dealt with. The Lord was pacified that the congregational chanting in public will continue. He now led the procession back towards the town.

Chanting and dancing began again with the previous jubilation and exuberance. Joy once more filled the atmosphere. the devotees were now free from any fear or anxiety. The Kazi said they could chant their beloved Lord Krishna's name at any time. The brahmana atheists of Nabadwip were subdued and their spirit was broken. The devotees were glad that the Lord's mission was victorious and jubilant.

१६

लक्ष्म लोचनाश्रु वर्र्ह हर्ष केश कर्त्तनम्
 कोति कन्ध क्रिष्ण कीर्तनाद्दह्य दन्द द्धारनम्
 न्यासि वेश सर्व देश हा हुताश कातरम्
 प्रेम द्धाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

16

lakṣa-locanāśru-varṣa-harṣa-keśa-karttanam
 koṭi-kaṇṭha-kṛṣṇa-kīrttanādhya-daṇḍa-dhāraṇam
 nyāsi-veśa-sarvva-deśa-hā-hutāśa-kātaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Gaurasundara departed from Nabadwip and went away to become a sannyasi (monk). He left behind his family members and friends, whose eyes were filled with tears. He accepted the staff and waterpot as his only possessions, the emblems of a renunciate. When his long hair was cut off and his head was shaved, thousands of voices sang the holy names. The devotee's eyes shed rivers of tears, since they knew he was going into the world and leaving them behind in Nabadwip. From that time, whoever saw him in the red garments of a sannyasi cried out loud in grief.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Sannyasa lila of Sri Chaitanya by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

According to solar calculation, it was on the day of Makara-sankrati, an auspicious conjunction of the stars, that Nimai Pandit went to Katwa to take sannyasa, the renounced order of life. After this, He would become known as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He swam across the Ganga and in wet cloth ran towards Katwa. Just before this, He told only a few friends, including Nityananda Prabhu, Gadadhara Pandit, Mukunda, and others, "The time when I will accept the robe of a renunciate is very near."

Just a few days before this, an opposition party (from within the caste-brahmin group) had been raised against Nimai Pandit. Those who believed that material nature is the highest principle, and that consciousness is a product of matter, began

to abuse Nimai Pandit. He thought, "I came to deliver the lowest of men, but if they commit offences against Me there will be no hope for their upliftment." Suddenly, He said, "I came with that medicine which gives the greatest relief, but now I find that their disease is rapidly growing worse and seems beyond treatment. It will take its own course towards doom. The patients are committing offences by abusing their doctor. They are making arrangements to insult Me. They take it that I am a family man - their nephew - they take Me as one of them. I came with the best medicine for the present degraded age, but now I find that they are plotting against Me. Now they are doomed. At least I have to show them that I am not one of them."

He thought, "I shall leave family life and take sannyasa and wander from village to village, town to town, preaching the Holy Name of Krishna." That was His decision, and within a few days He went to take sannyasa at Katwa from Keshava Bharati.

Late at night, at about three o'clock in the morning, Nimai went away. He left His wife Vishnupriya Devi asleep in bed. His mother Sachi Devi, sensing what was to come, was staying awake all night guarding the door. Nimai bowed down to her and went away. And like a stone figure, Mother Sachi Devi sat there by the gate as Nimai left. She could not say anything, but was struck dumb.

A little after three o'clock in the morning, Nimai swam across the Ganges and in His wet clothing went straight to Katwa, a distance of twenty five miles. He reached there by nine or ten o'clock. There, He approached Keshava Bharati to take sannyasa.

In the morning the devotees came to see Nimai and found Sachidevi like a statue, sitting at the door. Everything was empty. "What's the matter Sachidevi?" They asked. She told them, "Oh, I was waiting for you devotees. You take possession of the house. I shall go somewhere else. I can't enter this house anymore. You are His devotees; you are His true heirs. Take possession." They began to throng around her and console her. "You will go? What about the young wife He left? The girl is only fourteen years old. Who will protect her? You can't shun the responsibility given to you. It is on your shoulders." In this way they came to console her and tried to give her some hope.

Suddenly, the devotees heard that Nimai Pandit, Sri Gauranga, had left Nabadwip. They learned that He had gone to Katwa, to Keshava Bharati's ashram to take sannyasa, bidding goodbye to the people of Nabadwip forever.

A dark shadow came over them. Many began to weep and cry for Him. Many of them ran toward Katwa. Nimai Pandit was an unprecedented scholar with beautiful features - tall, fair and benevolent. He had already made the people mad with the Holy Name of Krishna. He had released the two great sinners Jagai and Madhai from their nasty life. He had checked the Mohammedan ruler, the Kazi, who had broken the mrdanga drum. As a famous pandit, He had defeated many scholars who came to conquer Nabadwip, which was much renowned for its high culture of learning, especially logic (nyaya).

But Nimai Pandit left Nabadwip forever and took sannyasa because the people of Nabadwip could not appreciate Him. He reached Katwa, where just on the bank of the Ganges, there was a sannyasi, Keshava Bharati. Nimai went to him and asked for sannyasa. Keshava Bharati suddenly found that his ashram was full of luster. At first, it seemed as if the sun was rising before him; then he saw that it was a bright person approaching. He rose from his seat and with strained eyes approached in wonder, "What is this?" he thought.

Then he realized that the great scholar-devotee Nimai Pandit had come. He appeared before him, saying, "I want to take sannyasa from you." But Keshava Bharati could not accept Nimai's offer. "I am charmed by your beauty and personality," he said. "But You are so young, only twenty four years old. What about your mother, wife and guardians.? Without consulting them, I cannot venture to give You the robe of renunciation."

In the meantime, as it was Makara-sankranti, a famous holiday, many people had come to take a bath in the holy waters of the Ganges. They gathered there and the rumour spread like fire: "Nimai Pandit of Nabadwip has come to take sannyasa." Many men flocked there, until a huge crowd gathered.

They all opposed Mahaprabhu's sannyasa. Some of them raised their voices in protest: "You, Keshava Bharati! We won't allow you to give sannyasa to this young man. He has His family, His mother and wife. We won't allow it. If you give sannyasa to this young boy we will break down your ashrama immediately."

But Nimai kept pressing him for sannyasa. At last, Keshava Bharati asked Him, "So, You are that Nimai Pandit about whom we have heard so much? Many big scholars came to conquer Nabadwip and You defeated them all. Are you that Nimai Pandit?"

"Yes," said Nimai.

Keshava Bharati told Him, "I can give you sannyasa, but You must take permission from Your mother - otherwise I won't, I can't do it." Nimai suddenly began running toward Nabadwip to ask permission.

But Keshava Bharati thought, "He has such a commanding personality, He can to anything."

Nimai was called back. Keshava Bharati told Him, "With Your most extraordinary personlity You can do anything. You will go there, charm Your guardians, get permission, and return. Nothing is impossible for You."

The ordinary public was very much enraged, saying to Keshava Bharati, "We can't allow you, Swamiji, to give sannyasa to this young boy. It is impossible! If you do, then we shall smash your ashrama."

Sri Chaitanya began performing kirtan, chanting Hare Krishna and dancing madly. And the angry mob grew, sometimes creating a distrubance. In this way, the whole day passed with no decision. The night passed in sankirtan. And the next day, Nimai's will prevailed, although there was some opposition.

Nityananda Prabhu, Candrasekara, Mukunda Datta and Jagadananda Pandit gradually arrived there. And that afternoon, the sannyasa function began. Candrasekhara Acharya was asked to perform the ceremony on behalf of Nimai Pandit, who began to chant and dance and charm the audience.

*laksa-locanasru-varsa-harsa-kesa-kartanam
koti-kantha-krishna-kirtanadhya-danda-dharanam
nyasi-vesa-sarvadesa-ha-hutasa-kataram
prema-dhama-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram*

"While showers of tears fell from the eyes of millions, He delighted in having His beautiful hair shaved away. Millions of voices sang the glories of Krishna, as Sri

Krishna Chaitanya accepted the staff of renunciation. From that day forward wherever He went, whoever saw Him in the dress of a sannyasi, cried in grief. I sing the glories of that beautiful Golden Lord, the giver of divine love."

The scene was at Katwa. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took sannyasa: He was young and beautiful, and with a tall figure, with beautiful curling hair. A barber was asked to shave Him, and approached Him, but then withdrew. The barber could not venture to touch Nimai's body. He began to cry, "How can I remove such beautiful hair from such a beautiful head?"

And many others were also crying aloud, "What a horrible thing is being done here! Who is the creator of this sannyasa? Who is so cold hearted that he created the sannyas ashrama where one must give up all that is near and dear and go door to door, begging, leaving his own friends and relatives crying helplessly? Is it logical? Is it a happy thing? It is most cruel!"

Nimai Pandit was smiling. After the barber was ordered repeatedly, somehow he was forced to shave Nimai's head. At first he could not venture to touch His hair, saying "I can't touch Him". But at last, he had to do the service of shaving the beautiful curling hair of the beautiful face of the twenty four year old boy genius. He began with his shears. In the midst of the weeping, wailing and crying of the threatening mob, it was done.

Nimai Pandit was senseless. After being only half shaved, He stood up and began chanting in kirtan and dancing in ecstatic joy. After He was shaved, the barber promised, "I will never again shave anyone with this hand! I would rather live by begging. This is my last service as a barber." After this, that barber took up the occupation of a sweetmaker.

Ultimately Nimai's appeals pacified the mob, and a little before noon the inevitable gradually came: the sannyasa function was performed. Chandrasekhara Acharya, the maternal uncle of Nimai Pandit, was deputed to take charge of the rituals in the ceremony of sannyasa. When the mantra was to be conferred, Nimai Pandit asked Keshava Bharati, "Is this the mantra you will give me? I heard it in a dream." He whispered the mantra in the ear of his guru who accepted, saying, "Yes, this is the mantra I shall give you." Then the mantra was given.

And the name of this sannyasi was not given in an ordinary way either. A most peculiar name came through Keshava Bharati: "Krishna Chaitanya". None of the ten names generally given to sannyasis was given to Nimai Pandit, but the name that was given to Him was Krishna Chaitanya. As soon as they heard that name, the mob began to cry, "Sri Krishna Chaitany Mahaprabhu ki jaya!" or, "All glory to Sri Krishna Chaitanya."

Sri Krishna Chaitanya, newly dressed in red robes, embraced His guru, and both of them began to dance, chanting the Name of Krishna. After some time, the meaning of the Name was given. Keshava Bharati said, "Sri Krishna Chaitanya means that you arouse Krishna consciousness throughout the entire world. You have descended to make all people Krishna conscious. So the most suitable Name for You cannot but be Sri Krishna Chaitanya."

१७

श्री यतीस षक्त वेश राद्धदेश चारनम्
 क्रिष्ण चैतन्यावह्य क्रिष्ण नाम जीव तारनम्
 ब्हाव विब्रमात्म मत्त द्हावमान बू द्हरम्
 प्रेम द्हाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

17

śrī-yatīsa-bhakta-veśa-rādhadeśa-cāraṇam
 kṛṣṇa-caitanya-kṛṣṇa-nāma-jīva-tāraṇam
 bhāva-vibhramātma-matta-dhāvamāna-bhū-dharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Dressed in new clothes as a sannyasi, Sri Gaurasundara, the supreme controller of all renunciates, wandered through Bengal purifying the land with the touch of his feet. Known thereafter by his sannyasi name, Sri Krishna Chaitanya, the Lord rescued all living souls by giving them Krishna's holy names. Intoxicated with ecstatic emotions erupting from the deepest feelings of devotional love, he seemed like a golden volcano as he continuously trembled with joy whilst moving this way and that, running here and there in every direction. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Mercy Incarnation
 by Srila Kaviraj Goswami
 Chaitanya Charitamṛta, Adi, Chapter Eight

*vande caitanya-devam tam bhagavantam yad-icchaya
 prasabham nartyate citram lekha-range jado 'py ayam*

I offer my respects to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, by whose desire I have become like a dancing dog and, although I am a fool, I have suddenly taken to the writing of Sri Chaitanya-Charitamṛta.

*jaya jaya sri-kṛṣṇa-caitanya gauracandra
 jaya jaya paramananda jaya nityananda*

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is known as Gaurasundara. I also offer my respectful obeisances unto Nityananda Prabhu, who is always very joyful.

*jaya jayadvaita acarya krpamaya
jaya jaya gadadhara pandita mahasaya*

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Advaita Acharyya, who is very merciful, and also to that great personality Gadadhara Pandita, the learned scholar.

*jaya jaya srivasadi yata bhakta-gana
pranata ha-ya vandon sabara carana*

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Srivasa Thakura and all other devotees of the Lord. I fall down to offer them respect. I worship their lotus feet.

*muka kavitva kare yan-sabara smarane
pangu giri langhe, andha dekhe tara-gane*

By remembering the lotus feet of the Panca-tattva, a dumb man can become a poet, a lame man can cross mountains, and a blind man can see the stars in the sky.

*e-saba na mane yei pandita sakala
ta-sabara vidya-patha bheka-kolahala*

The education cultivated by so-called learned scholars who do not believe these statements of Sri Chaitanya-Charitamrta is like the tumultuous croaking of frogs.

*ei saba na mane yeba kare krsna-bhakti
krsna-krpa nahi tare, nahi tara gati*

One who does not accept the glories of the Panca-tattva but still makes a show of devotional service to Krishna can never achieve the mercy of Krishna or advance to the ultimate goal.

*purve yaiche jarasandha-adi raja-gana
veda-dharma kari' kare visnura pujana*

Formerly kings like Jarasandha [the father-in-law of Kamsa] strictly followed the Vedic rituals, thus worshipping Lord Vishnu.

krsna nahi mane, tate daitya kari' mani
caitanya na manile taiche daitya tare jani

One who does not accept Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead is certainly a demon. Similarly, anyone who rejects Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as Krishna, the same Supreme Lord, is also to be considered a demon.

more na manile saba loka habe nasa
ithi lagi' krpardra prabhu karila sannyasa

Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu thought, "Unless people accept Me they will all be destroyed." Thus the merciful Lord accepted the sannyasa order.

sannyasi-buddhye more karibe namaskara
tathapi khandibe duhkha, paibe nistara

If a person offers obeisances to Me, even due to accepting Me only as an ordinary sannyasi, his material distresses will diminish, and he will ultimately get liberation.

hena krpamaya caitanya na bhaje yei jana
sarvottama ha-ileo tare asure ganana

One who does not show respect unto this merciful Lord, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, or does not worship Him should be considered a demon, even if he is very exalted in human society.

ataeva punah kahon urdhva-bahu hana
caitanya-nityananda bhaja kutarka chadiya

Therefore I say again, lifting my arms: O fellow human beings, please worship Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda without false arguments!

yadi va tarkika kahe,--tarka se pramana
tarka-sastre siddha yei, sei sevyamana

Logicians say, "Unless one gains understanding through logic and argument, how can one decide upon a worshipable Deity?"

sri-krsna-caitanya-daya karaha vicara
vicara karite citte pabe camatkara

If you are indeed trying to gain understanding, please deeply contemplate the mercy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. If you do so, you will find it strikingly wonderful.

*bahu janma kare yadi sravana, kirtana
tabu ta' na paya krsna-pade prema-dhana*

A person may chant and hear the holy name of Krishna for many lifetimes and not attain shelter at Krishna's feet or attain pure love for Krishna (Prema).

*jnanatah su-labha muktir bhuktir yajnadi-punyatah
seyam sadhana-sahasrairhari-bhaktih su-durlabha*

By cultivating philosophical knowledge one can understand his spiritual position and thus be liberated, and by performing sacrifices and pious activities one can achieve sense gratification in a higher planetary system, but the devotional service of the Lord is so rare that even by executing hundreds and thousands of such sacrifices one cannot obtain it.

*krsna yadi chute bhakte bhukti mukti diya
kabhu prema-bhakti na dena rakhena lukaiya*

If a devotee wants material sense gratification or liberation from the Lord, Krishna immediately delivers it, but pure devotional service He keeps hidden.

*rajan patir gurur alam bhavatam yadunam
daivam priyah kula-patih kva ca kinkaro vah
astv evam anga bhagavan bhajatam mukundo
muktim dadati karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam*

The great sage Narada said, 'My dear Maharaja Yudhisthira, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna is always ready to help you. He is your master, guru, God, very dear friend and head of your family. Yet sometimes He agrees to act as your servant or order-carrier. You are greatly fortunate because this relationship is possible only by bhakti-yoga. The Lord can give liberation [mukti] very easily, but He does not very easily give one bhakti-yoga, because by that process He is bound to the devotee.'

*hena prema sri-caitanya dila yatha tatha
jagai madhai paryanta--anyera ka katha*

Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has freely given this love of Krishna everywhere and anywhere, even to the most fallen, such as Jagai and Madhai. What then to speak of those who are already pious and elevated?

*svatantra isvara prema-nigudha-bhandara
bilaila yare tare, na kaila vicara*

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, is fully independent. Therefore, although it is the most confidentially stored benediction, He can distribute love of Godhead to anyone and everyone without consideration.

*adyapiha dekha caitanya-nama yei laya
krsna-preme pulakasru-vihvala se haya*

Whether he is offensive or inoffensive, anyone who even now chants sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu-nityananda is immediately overwhelmed with ecstasy, and tears fill his eyes.

*'nityananda' balite haya krsna-premodaya
aulaya sakala anga, asru-ganga vaya*

Simply by talking of Nityananda Prabhu one awakens his love for Krishna. Thus all his bodily limbs are agitated by ecstasy, and tears flow from his eyes like the waters of the Ganges.

*'krsna-nama' kare aparadhera vicara
krsna balile aparadhira na haya vikara*

There are offenses to be considered while chanting the Hare Krishna mantra. Therefore simply by chanting Hare Krishna one does not become ecstatic.

*tad asma-saram hrdayam batedam
yad grhyamanair hari-namadheyaih
na vikriyetatha yada vikaro
netre jalam gatra-ruhesu harsah*

If one's heart does not change, tears do not flow from his eyes, his body does not shiver, and his bodily hairs do not stand on end as he chants the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, it should be understood that his heart is as hard as iron. This is due to his offenses at the lotus feet of the Lord's holy name.

*'eka' krsna-name kare sarva-papa nasa
premera karana bhakti karena prakasa*

Simply chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra without offenses vanquishes all sinful activities. Thus pure devotional service, which is the cause of love of Godhead, becomes manifest.

*premera udaye haya premera vikara
sveda-kampa-pulakadi gadgadasrudhara*

When one's transcendental loving service to the Lord is actually awakened, it generates transformations in the body such as perspiration, trembling, throbbing of the heart, faltering of the voice and tears in the eyes.

*anayase bhava-ksaya, krsnera sevana
eka krsna-namera phale pai eta dhana*

As a result of chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, one makes such great advancement in spiritual life that simultaneously his material existence terminates and he receives love of Godhead. The holy name of Krishna is so powerful that by pure chanting of even one name, one very easily achieves these transcendental riches.

*hena krsna-nama yadi laya bahu-bara tabu yadi prema nahe, nahe asrudhara
tabe jani, aparadha tahate pracura krsna-nama-bija tahe na kare ankura*

If one chants the exalted holy name of the Lord again and again and yet his love for the Supreme Lord does not develop and tears do not appear in his eyes, it is evident that because of his offenses in chanting, the seed of the holy name of Krishna does not sprout.

*caitanya-nityanande nahi esaba vicara
nama laite prema dena, vahe asrudhara*

But if one only chants, with some slight faith, the holy names of Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda, very quickly he is cleansed of all offenses. Thus as soon as he chants the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, he feels the ecstasy of love for God.

*svatantra isvara prabhu atyanta udara
tanre na bhajile kabhu na haya nistara*

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead, is greatly magnanimous. Unless one worships Him, one can never be liberated.

१८

श्री गदादहरादि नित्यानन्द सन्ना वद्दर्शनम्
 अद्वयाक्लृप्ता भक्त मुक्लृप्ता वान्छितार्थ सादहनम्
 कश्चेत्र वास साङ्खिलाशह मात्रि तोशह तत्परम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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śrī-gadādharaḍi-nityānanda-saṅga-varddhanam
 advayākhyā-bhakta-mukhya-vāñchitārtha-sāadhanam
 kṣetra-vāsa-sāṅghilāṣa-mātrī-toṣa-tatparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Accompanied by Sri Gadadhar Pandit and Prabhu Nityananda, Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya bestows good fortune to everyone. When Sri Chaitanya descended to Earth as the Avatara for the age of Kali the Lord fulfilled the prayers of Sri Advaita Acharya. To please his mother Sachi Devi the Lord agreed to stay nearby at Jagannathat Puri.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Sri Sri Nitai-Chaitanya-Arati by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

Actually there is some background to the reason that I composed this kirttan. In the Gaudiya Vaisnava society, especially in the time of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami, we have been singing at the arati time, "Jaya jaya Gaurachander arotiko sobha." The divine forms of Radha, Krishna and Mahaprabhu are on the altar, and we are doing arati to the three of them every day, but only singing glorification of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Why are Radha, Govinda and Mahaprabhu within the same simhasana and what is Their glorification? That type of arati kirttan is not in our sampradaya.

Then I prayed to Srila Guru Maharaj: "Can you kindly make one arati sankirttan of that?" Then Guru Maharaj composed the Radha, Krishna and Mahaprabhu Arati, "Jayare jayare jaya Gaura-Saraswati, Bhaktivinoda nvaṃ karuṇa murati." Then every Friday we were singing that song and giving honour. Now we are

singing both "Jaya jaya Gaurachander arotiko sobha," and "Jayare jayare jaya Gaura-Saraswati," every day.

At the time of composing "Jayare jayare jaya Gaura-Saraswati," Srila Guru Maharaj was organising the whole Gaudiya Mission.

*sujanarvvuda-radhita-pada-yugam yuga-dharmma-dhurandhara-patra-varam
varadabhaya-dayaka-pujya-padam pranamami sada prabhupada-padam*

Many devotees do not know who composed this song. It is a composition of Srila Guru Maharaj, a Sanskrit composition.

I felt it was necessary for the Nitai-Chaitanya song because we have Mahaprabhu's song, but in Puri Dham, Nitai-Chaitanya are living together. The Deities manifested in the time of Srila Guru Maharaj and I thought it would be very good if I could compose a song. Srila Guru Maharaj was showing his age at that time and he could not write any more. Then, taking permission from Srila Guru Maharaj, I composed that song. Nitai-Chaitanya are worshipped by the devotees at arati time, and a special arati kirttan for Nitai-Chaitanya is very appropriate.

*jaya guru maharaja karunasagara
sri bhakti raksak deva-goswami sridhara*

If we want to do anything we must firstly go to Gurudeva. So we are giving 'jaya' to Gurudeva and taking his permission. Our Srila Guru Maharaj is Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami and I am giving 'jaya' to His Divine Grace.

*prakasile nilachale bhuvanamangala
nitai-chaitanya-deva-seva samujjvala*

'Nilachala' means Puri Dham. There in Puri Dham, both Nitai and Chaitanyadeva are manifested by the divine mercy of Srila Guru Maharaj and Their service is going on continuously.

*gorapreme matoyara nityanandarupa
rasaraja mahabhava chaitanya-svarupa*

Then comes the glorification of those personalities who are living on the simhasan (altar). First is the glorification of Nityananda Prabhu, because by the grace of Nityananda Prabhu we will get the mercy of Lord Chaitanya

Mahaprabhu. We are saying Nitai-Chaitanya, and it is very appropriate because Nityananda Prabhu is the form of Sri Gurudeva and also without His mercy we will not get the mercy of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Sometimes we are saying Chaitanya-Nitai but normally Nitai-Chaitanya. Both are standing there and giving Their merciful glance to the conditioned souls. One form is in the intoxicated, dancing mood of Nityananda Prabhu, always giving the fearless spiritual wealth by which we will be benefited. Happily we can practise that. The mood of Nityananda Prabhu, with His right hand up and left hand giving merciful blessings is the mood that fearlessly you will do service. And Mahaprabhu is also present there, but in the form of Rasaraja and Mahabhava. Actually Mahaprabhu's form is Krishna Himself taking the heart and halo of Radharani and becoming Chaitanyadeva. Then Rasaraja is actually Krishna and Mahabhava is Radharani. Krishna and Radharani are both there within one, and that is Chaitanya-svarupa, Mahaprabhu. And His manifestation we are seeing in the simhasan.

kasita-kanchana jini sri-anga labani

duhugale vanamala bhavera dolani

Both are standing effulgent like gold. When gold is cut with a sharp knife its effulgence comes out more and more. Their golden form is like that, fully effulgent. Garlands of different beautiful flowers are there and those garlands are playing on the necks of Nitai-Chaitanyadeva.

murachita kotikama ruparasarange

madhura narttana-bhava varabhaya bhange

If anyone will see that divine form of Nitai-Chaitanyadeva he will faint with transcendental feelings. They are dancing in the mood of bestowing mercy, touching the hearts of everyone and inconceivably giving mercy to the conditioned souls in an unconditional way.

koti-chandra-bhanusobha ratna-simhasane

prema netre dekhe mahabhagyavana jane

Nitai-Chaitanyadeva are like the morning sun and the full moon but our vision is covered. If we look with clean, devotional eyes, full of love and affection, then we can see Their divine form. And for this vision, we need good fortune which comes through the mercy of the Vaisnavas. Then with sadhu-sanga, association of the Vaisnavas and their merciful glance, we can see that divine form.

*mrdanga mandira baje susankha-dhvanita
sruti-moli-ratnamala-dipa-nirajita*

Here is an ornamental expression. When this type of arati comes and we stand in front of Nitai-Chaitanyadeva and do the arati, what do we do? We play the mrdanga and the karatals and we blow the conch. Externally it happens but also internally. With the panchapati, the ghee lamp with 108 wicks, we are doing arati. Externally we are doing this and internally we shall try to see that each lamp of that arati, is not only a lamp but it is the Vedas. The different parts of the Vedas that are existing within bhakti-yoga have taken form in each lamp as a bhakti-yoga lamp. The 108 Upanishads and all others are taking this form and worshipping the Lord through that arati.

*bhuvanamohan duhu rupera arati
gupta-vrindaranyavasi dekhe niravadhi*

Anyone who will look with *prema netra* (eyes of love) will see love, real love and affection, and they will be extremely charmed. Only those who are living in Gupta Vrindavan can see with that type of vision. Gupta Vrindavan means Nabadwip Dham. Those who are living in Nabadwip Dham are always looking at that arati of Nitai Chaitanyadeva. Every day this arati is performed and by the grace of Srila Guru Maharaj this property of Nabadwip has come to Puri Dham to bestow its mercy on the conditioned souls. This type of Arati is only seen by the Nabadwip Dhambasis, the *parshadas* (associates) of Sriman Mahaprabhu, and those who are very affectionate with Mahaprabhu, Chaitanyadeva.

*sri svarupa ramananda rupa-sanatana
raghunatha haridasa gadadhara dhana*

And His associates, Sri Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda Raya, Rupa Goswami, Sanatana Goswami, Raghunatha Das Goswami, Haridas Thakur and Gadadhara Pandit are performing this arati and seeing this arati.

*sarvvabhauma gopinatha jivanugajana
dekhena aratisobha durllabha-darsana*

Sarvabhauma Bhattacharyya, Gopinath Acharyya and Jivanugajana, those who are living in the sampradaya of Jiva Goswami, they are all glorifying that arati, looking at that arati and doing that arati. It is very easy for them to do this but it is very difficult for others.

*nadiya prakase nityananda-gauranidhi
patitapavanaksetra milaila vidhi*

We are so fortunate that the arati of Gauranga and Nityananda is very famous in Nabadwip Dham, where Nityananda Prabhu and Mahaprabhu are present eternally. But in patitapavanaksetra, Puri Dham, it has been mercifully given by our fortune-maker, Sri Gurudeva.

*avichintya nityananda-chaitanya-prakasa
Sri guru-prasade dekhe ei adhama dasa*

'Avichintya' means inconceivable. This type of arati can only be conceived by a very fortunate soul. He can see it and can also do that arati if he has received the mercy of Srila Gurudeva. Through the mercy of Gurudeva anyone can see this type of manifestation of Nitai-Chaitanyadeva and Their arati, and can join within that sankirttan.

१९

न्यासि राज नील शैल वास सार्वभौमपम्
 दाक्षिणान्त्य तीर्त्ह जात ब्रक्त कल्प पादपम्
 राम मेघ राग ब्रक्ति त्रिशित शक्ति सन्चरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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nyāsi-rāja-nīla-śaila-vāsa-sārvvabhaumapam
 dākṣiṇātya-tīrtha-jāta-bhakta-kalpa-pādapam
 rāma-megha-rāga-bhakti-triṣṭi-śakti-saṅcaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Arriving in Puri, the city of Lord Jagannatha (Krishna), Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya met the famous pandit of Vedanta named Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, who he converted into a devotee. He then proceeded to South India where he encountered the followers of various philosophies. Like a tree that can produce any sweet fruit that anyone desires, the Lord fulfilled the heart's desires of all the devotees he visited in South India. He met with the great devotee Sri Ramananda Raya, who is like a deep raincloud full of the nectar of devotion, at a holy place on the bank of the Godavari River. Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya empowered Ramananda Raya to produce a shower of nectarean mellows of spontaneous loving service to Sri Krishna, as practiced by the most exalted devotees in the land of Vraja.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

२०

प्रेम द्दहाम दिव्य दीर्घ देह देव नन्दितम्
 हेम कन्ज पुन्ज निन्दि कान्ति चन्द्र वन्दितम्
 नाम गान त्रित्य नव्य दिव्य ब्हाव मन्दिरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

20

prema-dhāma-divya-dīrgha-deha-deva-nanditam
 hema-kañja-puñja-nindi-kānti-candra-vanditam
 nāma-gāna-ṇṛtya-navya-divya-bhāva-mandiram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The original and ever fresh, ever new philosophy presented by Sri Krishna Chaitanya devastated the philosophy of Vasudeva Sarvabhauma, who had tried to use crooked logic and perversion of the meaning of words to assert the impersonalist philosophy of Shankara (vivartavarda) which is opposed to the auspicious doctrine of loving devotion to Lord Sri Krishna (suddha-bhakti). Shankara taught that this world of variegated forms is an illusion and that the individual soul (atma) is one with God. Shankara summed up his entire philosophy in four words: *brahma satya jagan mithya* (spirit is true, the phenomenal world is non-existent). But Sri Chaitanya taught that the world is real and that the souls in the world are tiny servants of God. Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya explained to Vasudeva Sarvabhauma that the Vedic literature in its entirety should be viewed as a temple enshrining the philosophy of pure devotion (suddha-bhakti). I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Gaudiya Vaishnava Theology by Srila Bhakti Saranga Goswami Maharaj

The Hindu Scriptures teach us, according to Sri Krishna Chaitanya, nine principle doctrines:

- 1) Hari (the Almighty) is One without a second.
- 2) He is full of infinite power.
- 3) He is the ocean of Rasa (beauty and sweetness).

- 4) The individual souls, the living beings, are His separated parts.
- 5) Certain souls are engrossed in Maya, the illusory energy of the Lord.
- 6) Certain other souls are released from the bondage of Maya.
- 7) All spiritual and material phenomena are connected to the Lord but distinct from Him.
- 8) Bhakti, or devotion to God, is the only means of attaining the final and highest objective of life, the attainment of spiritual existence.
- 9) Prema, or holy love for Krishna, is alone the final and highest objective of life.

This Theistic vision is not attainable by the theories of mundane science. It is, however, not opposed to a truly rational conclusion or understanding. It satisfies, fully, the needs of our real moral sense. It floods our life with peace, joy and hope, freeing us from all evils and solving the mystery of pain, vice and death.

There can be no real intellectual assent to the truths of Theism without giving our whole higher selves to God in the fullest trust, love and obedience. Then only are we really convinced, when we actually realise the imperative necessity for ourselves and for all animation of attaining the spiritual service of Krishna, who is all-love. The process of Bhakti (devotion) then is no longer a mundane theory or a set of mundane propositions but instead something that brings about the complete dedication of all we do and think and say to the constant service of Transcendence.

We should begin to allot some time and energy to learn of the Absolute Truth, revealed by the scriptures through the living scripture, by which I mean the sadhu (saintly devotee of God). The more we practice associating with saints, the more we can detect our hallucinations in our current conceptions of God; and our faith will rise higher and higher till it reaches the Divine Holy Feet of Krishna.

When this faith in Krishna is kindled in the doubting heart and we really seek to be enlightened in perfect humility, Krishna sends to us a good preceptor to guide us in the path of the Absolute. I am engaged today in carrying out the precepts of my Divine Master, Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur. I am trying in my humble way to explain religion as I have heard from his holy lips. Hearing about true religion is the one needful thing for both the theists and the atheists.

Religion means the spiritual process by which our souls are re-united to the Absolute Lord by the bond of his eternal willing service, which is the proper function of each individual soul. Religion establishes our relationship with God. It provides a means to go deeper into the profundity of the Divine. And it leads to our attaining holy love – the supreme purpose of spritual pursuits. Religion is harmonious and universal. God is one without a second, and His religion also is one for humanity as a whole, though exoterically or morphologically it may vary in certain external circumstances. The esoterical or morphological aspect of all true religion is one and the same, viz., Divine Love. And that religion which warrants the highest loving devotion to God is the best of all and should be followed by all intelligent human beings.

Philosophically, our eternal self is something other than the physical body made of earth, water, fire, air and ether, and the subtle body made of mind, intelligence and perverted ego. The soul is a spiritual entity quite distinct from the physical body and the astral body made of matter – either in gross or subtle forms. The soul is the proprietor of these two properties, the gross and subtle bodies, which are perishable. The soul is neither born nor does it die. The soul has everlasting existence. It is exempt from liability to extinction. Under the influence of Maya, the illusory energy of God, which manifests itself in the shape of this mundane world, the soul is again and again vested with a corporeal frame and each conditioned soul passes after death into a series of new existences in heaven and hell or in the bodies of men, beasts, birds, insects, or plants on earth, where it is rewarded or punished for all the deeds committed in a former life. The soul may soar so high as to become a divine being fully conscious of his own true nature as an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord in the spiritual kingdom, or it may descend so low as to appear no better than sticks and stones.

The destiny of each individual soul is thus made or marred by himself. As spiritual beings, all individual souls possess the faculty of free will divinely bestowed upon them. They can abuse this gift of God or they can make the best use of it. The Supreme Lord does not interfere with His gift, viz., the soul's freedom of choice.

All individual souls though intrinsically of the same nature with God are but infinitesimal Absolutes when compared with the Infinite Absolute Personality and are therefore servants of God.

Just as the rays of the sun are always associated with the sun, so also, as associated parts of the Absolute-Sun, all individual souls are expected to exist with the Eternal Existent Lord, to know the Omniscient Lord and to enjoy Infinite Bliss by eternally rendering loving service to Him. But, for the transgression of deviation away from Him through misuse of their free will, the external potency of God, Maya, suppresses them by way of showing a diversity of existence, in the same way as rays of sunlight streaming away from the sun get their normal aspect of brightness diminished and suppressed when they are reflecting upon dark material things.

The natural function of rendering eternal service to God which is common to all souls lies hidden under the cover of manifold miseries when they want to lord it over the universe instead of serving the Supreme Lord.

To explain further, just as the luminous substance of the sun appears as 1) the solar disk, 2) the individual rays, and 3) the reflection; so also the inconceivable power of the Absolute-Sun manifests Himself in three ways: 1) the Internal Potency; 2) the Intermediate Potency, and 3) the External Potency. The Intermediate Potency resolves into individual souls like us, which correspond to the individual rays of sunlight. The External Potency or Maya corresponds to the reflection (as when light reflects upon the surface of the sea). And the Internal Potency corresponds to the solar disk, the Spiritual Sun itself – the kingdom of God. The orb of the sun contains the individual rays, yet the rays are found to be scattered away from the sun; similarly the individual souls, though ultimately contained within the same Reservoir of Light (God) are scattered away by reason of their being averse to the service of God from beginningless time.

Religion seeks to reestablish our relationship with our eternal Lord, and our living service to Him, by attaining Divine Love, which is the panacea for all evils in this world.

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दृहस्त सार्व्वभौम वाद नव्य तर्क शान्करम्
 दृहस्त तद् विवर्त्त वाद दानवीय दम्बरम्
 दर्शितार्ह सर्व्व शास्त्र क्रिश्ह भक्ति मन्दिरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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dhvasta-sārvvabhauma-vāda-navya-tarka-śāṅkaram
 dhvasta-tad-vivartta-vāda-dānavīya-ḍambaram
 darśitārtha-sarvva-śāstra-kṛṣṇa-bhakti-mandiram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The grand intellectual Sarvabhauma tried his level best to establish the impersonal doctrine of Shankaracharya, which is in direct opposition to the conclusions of pure loving dedication to the Lord. Sarvabhauma used the most deceitful means in the art of word jugglery. He tried to pervert the sense of words, he idly heckled the arguments or assertions of the Lord without attempting to prove the opposite side, and he tried to find the weak points in the Lord's arguments. However, Sri Chaitanya, whose charming figure was cloaked in the fresh garments of a radiant renunciate, presented consistent arguments in conjunction with the Vedic literatures, and easily checked and destroyed the scholar's atheistic interpretations. The Lord loudly proclaimed that the doctrine of Shankaracharya known as vivartavad is practiced by followers in the ascending method of understanding who are interested in their external self-adoration. Such worship is the product of a demoniac intellect and backed by atheistic perseverance. All importance given to the nonmanifest aspect of material nature was refuted when Lord Gaurasundara established that spiritual variegatedness in the Supreme Lord's personality is the highest reality taught in the Vedic literature. This was shown in the Lord's explanation of the Upanisads, where it is stated: *apanipado javano grahita pasyatyacaksuh sa smotyakaranah* "The Lord has no hands or legs, yet He walks and touches. The Lord has no eyes or ears, yet He sees and hears." Lord Gaurasundara also explained the *atmarama* verse which is found in the grandest of all famous literature, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. He clearly showed that the Vedas, Puranas, Vedanta, and all other existing Scriptures, which are like a magnificent temple where the Supreme Lord's wonderful pastimes are eternally resounded, support the conclusion that everything in this world is a

reflection of the eternal variegatedness found in the spiritual realm.
I offer my obeisances to that beautiful Golden Lord, Gauranga Sundar, the divine form of Krishna prema.

Illumination:

Introduction to Sri Krishna Chaitanya by Professor Nishikanta Sanyal

After the soul has got tired of the death-like monotony of mental speculations regarding the Truth and has also had sufficient experience of the delusive nature of both empiric knowledge and its promised prospects, he is inclined by a sense of sheer helplessness and misery to turn to the method of absolute submission to the spiritual preceptor and the Scriptures for relief. This negative attitude is turned into one of positive and earnest inquiry by accidental association with sadhus. It is for the reason of finding the sadhu that a person who is utterly disgusted with worldly living and the method of mental speculation, renounces the world and sets out on pilgrimage to holy places in search of self-realised souls who are supposed to reside at such places. It is rarely, indeed, that the true devotee of God reveals himself to the fortunate seeker. The sadhu is himself a transcendental being. To really know the sadhu is to be endowed with the spiritual vision. It is only by the Grace of God that the transcendental nature of His devotee can be realised.

It is only after the sadhu has been found that spiritual pupilage can really begin by the process of unconditional submission to his guidance. Then the disciple has to pass through the period of novitiate. If he does this with a guileless heart he is rewarded with the sight of God Himself and with His transcendental and eternal service. This last is the summum bonum. There is, however, gradation in the transcendental service of Godhead. It is not possible for the soul liable to conditioned existence to have the full knowledge of the Absolute. The jiva-soul is delicately poised on the border-line that separates the limited from the spiritual. He has the potentiality of affinity for either. His affinity for the limited is due to freedom of initiative inherent in all animation conjoined to absence of perfect vision by reason of his tiny magnitude. Such affinity is, however, really opposed to his proper nature which is essentially spiritual. The affinity of the soul for the spiritual can, therefore, be maintained only by the help of souls who are not liable to affinity for the limited. These eternally free souls are the inseparable associated counterparts of the Supreme Soul or Godhead Himself. The sadhus have no

mundane affinity. By the help of sadhus the conditioned soul is enabled to attain to the plane of the Absolute.

But the novice has to pass through definite grades of progressive revelation. The full view of the Divinity is the last to be attained. The service of Divinity attains its perfection only on attainment of the complete vision.

The first Appearance of Godhead to the view of the spiritual novice is as Vasudeva or the Transcendental supreme single Male Person. This dissipates his empiric error that the Truth is an abstract principle. The appearance of Vasudeva also frees the novice from the error that mistakes the Personality of the Absolute as having any mundane quality or reference.

Vasudeva is self-revealed in the unobstructive cognitive essence of the pure soul. He is the positive Reality as distinguished from the abstraction of the mental speculationists from the fleeting impressions of deluding entities limited by material space and broken up by the operation of passing time. Vasudeva is located above and beyond this unwholesome mundane plane. The realisation of His Transcendental Personality is possible only to the spiritual cognitive principle, which is the essence of the soul, as distinguished from material or limiting principle. Vasudeva is the One Person without a second. He is a Person with a Transcendental figure resembling the actual form of a male human being but, inconceivably to us, free from all limited or unwholesome characteristics of the human form that is familiar to us. Vasudeva appears as the Sole Recipient of our service. He is realised as comprehending all existence including that of His servitors. He is Male but free from all mundane associations of sex. These opposite qualities are spontaneously reconciled in His Transcendental Personality.

This is the first positive spiritual experience of the progressing novice. The worshipper of Vasudeva is, therefore, a truly spiritual devotee. He is categorically different from the atheist, agnostic, skeptic, elevationist or salvationist who are all of them strictly confined to the mundane plane. The worship of Vasudeva is performed by the spiritual essence of the pure soul on the transcendental plane. Vasudeva can be worshipped only by the process that is absolutely free from all mundane reference. Therefore, the worship of Vasudeva is also a gift of Vasudeva Himself. Vasudeva is identical in essence with His worship and with His worshipper. All of them belong to the same plane of the soul which is located

beyond the scope of our limited mental faculties. Vasudeva manifests Himself to the pure essence of the jiva-soul as soon as the latter is at all disposed to serve Him in the proper way. It is rarely that a conditioned soul can attain to the spiritual service of Vasudeva. The conditioned soul is ordinarily prepared to be content with negative speculation. Very few persons of this world realise the necessity of search for the Supreme Personality Who is revealed to us by all the Scriptures.

Everything concerning Vasudeva is purely spiritual. His name, servitors, paraphernalia, abode, form and activities are an inseparable part and parcel of Himself. No amount of description can enable the reader to realise the nature of Vasudeva so long as one is not freed from the fetters of his limited faculties of apprehension. Vasudeva can be realised only by the grace of His devotee if we are really prepared to follow his instructions in every act of our life. The devotee of Vasudeva can alone properly instruct us regarding the nature of the receptive attitude that is the natural position of the pure soul in regard to the Absolute and which can be restored to the conditioned soul only by the grace of Vasudeva if its attainment is sincerely desired by him, by the grace of His devotee.

The sight of Vasudeva disposes of all the doubts and difficulties of atheists and agnostics and skeptics, as a matter of course. The sight of Vasudeva also destroys the idols of the pantheists and the nihilism of the pseudo-monists. The Truth is actually found to have the figure of a human being. This is not in any way derogatory to the Truth. Man is located in the middle position. There extend on either side of him, above and below, two infinite gradations of superior and inferior beings. Godhead would, therefore, be conceived by our limited understanding as occupying the highest position in the series. But would this assumption be also logical? The prevailing notion in favour of making Godhead something altogether unlike man is no less fanatical than the opposite notion cherished by the anthropomorphists of making Him identical with man. It is not impossible to steer clear of this double fanaticism. The Scriptures declare that Godhead possesses a Form that is identical with Himself and that the Divine Form is ultimately like that of man. Godhead has an infinity of Forms but His Human Form is His Fullest, Highest and His Own Specific Personality.

So Vasudeva is not to be confounded with any object of Physical Nature nor with any product of mental speculation. He is located beyond Physical Nature and beyond the mental scope. Yet Vasudeva has the Form of a human being. He has

an infinity of Forms who are secondary extensions of this original Divine Form. The Scriptures fully support the Biblical dictum that man is made after God's own image. It is needless to labour the point further at this place.

The sight of Vasudeva, therefore, shatters all idols and substitutes of Divine Personality by revealing the real Object of all worship. This is the beginning of positive theism. Vasudeva, by His Human Form, pervades the whole world. Hence He is Vishnu. But Vasudeva pervades the mundane world without being of it. As pervading Physical Nature Vasudeva bears the name of Vishnu. Those fortunate souls who realise this fact are called Vaishnavas or worshippers of Vishnu. No one who is not a Vaishnava can be a theist. The Vaishnava is endowed with the experience of the transcendental plane and is thus in a position to understand how Godhead pervades all Physical Nature without possessing any mundane organs or forms. The enlightenment is imparted by Vasudeva Himself.

The soul of man can know Vasudeva by His grace. The corresponding attitude in the recipient of His Grace is that of the unconditionally submitting disposition. If a person is not prepared to submit unreservedly for being enlightened by grace he cannot attain to the sight of Vasudeva and is doomed by his own vain choice to grope endlessly in the dark, unwholesome labyrinths of Physical Nature. By such unspiritual activity the soul may attain all conceivable conditions on the higher and lower mundane planes, but he can never attain to the vision of Vasudeva. Vasudeva has strictly reserved the right of not being exposed to the view of the conditioned soul who is not prepared to render Him willing and unconditional service. Vasudeva manifests Himself to the unclouded cognition of the soul in his perfect state of causeless, spontaneous, submissive devotion to Himself. So the two processes are simultaneous without being in any way related to one another as cause and effect. This is inconceivable to the limited experience of men but need not be logically considered as impossible in the Divinity. It ensures the reconciliation of perfect freedom of initiative on the part of the individual soul with the necessity of unconditional dependence on the Divinity for all real well-being.

The empiricist's contention - that as all language is a product of the limiting energy in the form of mundane Nature the very terms used to denote a spiritual entity only prove the inevitable mundane origin of an idea - does not apply to the case of the revealed vocabulary. It is not the contention of the transcendentalist that the Reality is more than one. What the transcendentalist declares is that there

is possibility of suppressed, blurred and misguided vision of the Reality. The Energy that causes this distortion necessarily creates the mundane world of the distorted vision as the complement of such vision. The whole affair is not also unrelated to the Reality. It is the deluding face of the Reality Who is undoubtedly One. There is thus a running correspondence between the mundane and the transcendental as far as there is no actual suppression of the latter. The vocabulary of this world is, therefore, applicable also to the transcendental realm but only in the transcendental sense.

The real difficulty is that the transcendental sense cannot be possessed by any one who is not favoured by the Grace of God. The actual number of such persons in the state of grace is very small in this world. The voice of this infinitesimal minority is liable to be ignored by those whose object is to proclaim views arrived at by their limited experiences. Once the necessity of the transcendental vision is properly aroused in any person, he is not likely to urge these empiric objections against the transcendental position.

The name 'Vasudeva' is identical with the Divinity. But this is true in the transcendental sense only. In the transcendental sense, however, it is really true. Nay more, Vasudeva is the only real Truth. He is the Absolute Truth Himself. The empiric limited, relative apprehension of the name Vasudeva is not Absolute Truth. It is the product of the distorted view of the Truth Who can be but Absolute. In this distorted sense the empiric realisation is not untrue. But it is not given to those who are themselves under the delusion to realise this actual state of affairs. The person who possesses the absolute vision can alone understand the real position of the empiricists. He does not ignore the empiric view nor denies its existence. He only says that it is a real, but distorted, view of the Truth Who is one and the same in Himself.

It is of course not possible to push the empiricists up to the transcendental level by the force of controversy alone. Because all appeal to the empiricists on behalf of the Absolute is ultimately based on the realisation of the Absolute as the only Reality. So long as a person does not possess the actual experience of the Absolute he can but look through the false glasses that are alone available to him. The empiricist can have no real Sight of the Absolute as He is, till he is favoured by the Grace of God. At the most he can only admit the necessity of Divine Grace for obtaining the view of the Absolute, Real or Substantive Truth. It is only then

that he can really understand the true meaning of the proposition regarding the Absolute, viz., that the Name Vasudeva is identical with Godhead Himself.

Therefore, those who may be disposed to accept in principle the worship of Vasudeva but are opposed to the phraseology and ritual that are actually employed in His worship, still continue to flounder in the empiric bog. Such blind assent will do them no real good. Their assent is assent in the empiric sense which is no assent to the Absolute. But there is also such a thing as real assent to the Absolute. This assent is the attitude of the awakened soul. This assent is identical with the whole process of worship of Vasudeva, including its ritual and vocabulary.

The objection to detail under the cover of a general assent to principle, is a dangerous ruse that is often resorted to by self deluded mentalists for avoiding the clear confession of the Truth. The attitude is really, at the far end, the product of that radical insincerity of disposition which feels an abnormal perverse joy in opposing the Truth at all costs. The objection against the vocabulary and ritual should be perfectly untenable if it is made to rest, as it really is, on such thin casuistry. There does exist the legitimate objection against lifeless ritual and pseudo-exhibitions of irrational orthodoxy. But even condemnation of the hypocrite, however justifiable in itself, is liable to degenerate into the most subtle and dangerous form of insincerity if it does not proclaim a stronger inclination to the Truth Himself.

As a matter of fact the Truth is one and indivisible. But He is not therefore, really zero. When we think of Him we require to be on our guard against worldliness on the one hand and hypocrisy on the other. The one leads to worship of Physical Nature or Pantheism in all its forms and the other to Nihilism which is only the negation of Pantheism and can exist at all only in a relation of contradiction to it. Both Pantheism and Non-ism are accustomed to profess its identity with Monotheism. The followers of both creeds are worldlings of opposite schools who have no intention of acting up to their professions. Neither is it practicable for them to do otherwise. It is possible for them to be relieved of these anomalous conditions only by the actual realisation of self-consistency by the attainment of the real knowledge of the Truth which none of them possesses.

The empiric ignorance of Truth is not one of degree. It is one of category. The empiricists can form no idea of the nature of the Truth as He really is. For such a

person to set up as a critic of the Truth, is sheer folly and malice. To try to mask one's foolishness and malice under the garb of a kind of a hollow ethical prejudice, makes it doubly worse. The empiric critics of the worship of Vasudeva formulated in the Scriptures, should not ruthlessly sin against these universal canons of sound constructive criticism.

It is for this very reason that the study of the Scriptures is forbidden to those who do not possess the necessary preliminary knowledge that should effectively prevent the assumption of an attitude of profanity. There is nothing to be gained by any form of real opposition to the Truth. Even the empiricists should be able to see this although in their distorted manner.

The different creeds and Scriptures as interpreted by the empiric judgment, tend to the elaboration of a hybrid theology that is neither here nor there. Empiric theology is a sheer contradiction in terms. The Absolute comprehends everything but is Himself ever incomprehensible. The empiric judgment is not honestly prepared to admit that the Absolute is the only Substantive Existence. The moment that we admit this we realise the necessity of waiting on the pleasure of the Absolute in all our activities. Vasudeva is pleased to reveal Himself to this purified submissive state of the soul. The pure soul fully recognizes the causeless Grace of Vasudeva as the sole sufficing cause of the realisation of the Incomprehensible by our present otherwise limited faculties. The pure soul deduces all his conclusions regarding propriety of his conduct from this fundamental admission.

Once this position is really taken up by the soul he ceases to quarrel with the Scriptures, even when he does not understand. He now knows that it is not possible nor necessary to understand the Truth in the empiric sense of the term. There is such a thing as real understanding which can be only a gift from the living Truth and identical with Him. The appearance of the Truth on His own initiative is both the cause and result of all real knowledge. These processes are one and indivisible. They only manifest themselves to the receptive consciousness of the submissive soul by their own free choice. The empiric attitude is that of revolt against this unconditional supremacy of the one living Truth. It stands in the way of unreserved faith in the Scriptures as the necessary preliminary condition of the right understanding of the Absolute. The attitude of submission to the Absolute is neither blind nor slavish nor a gross form of

superstition. It is the awakening of the real rational function of which all mental activity is but disloyal, hideous caricature.

The spiritual guide who imparts the knowledge of the Absolute is then found to be part and parcel of the true rational existence. The rituals of the spiritual Scriptures are realised as the eternal function of the soul who is by his real nature free from all worldly taint and weaknesses.

The fool's paradise is the one that all persons possess by the inalienable right of mundane birth. It is superfluous to carry the same into the real paradise. It is necessary for the attainment of this latter purpose to desist from the building of Babel. It is necessary to desist from all speculation on the subject as it is obstructive of the advent of the Truth. The Truth is ever seeking entry into the heart that is really open to welcome Him. The closed heart alone is busy in the fool's paradise with its own disloyal fancies. Till one really knows Him one need not proclaim that he does. This rule is admitted by all but is observed by very few persons when they try to talk about the real Truth. The Truth can never be mastered by our puppy brain. It is the puppy brain that should be allowed to be mastered by the Truth for its own benefit. But it is the Nature of Truth to accept only perfectly willing service. It is, therefore, only necessary to reject all untruth and to await the coming of the Truth. This can be done if we only choose to do it. When one wishes to render such unconditional homage to the Truth his wish is fulfilled by the Truth Himself. The cobwebs of a deceptive moral code cannot then any longer bind his eyes and stifle his heart's sincerity. Vasudeva then manifests Himself to the pure essence of the soul of His loyal devotee.

As soon as a person is really established in the worship of Vasudeva by His Grace he is endowed with the disposition that opens up to his vision the definite vista of the Divine Realm. He is conducted by the Light of Vasudeva into the Realm of the Absolute. He finds it inhabited by the servants of Vasudeva. Vasudeva now presents His fuller Aspect in the coupled Form of Lakshmi-Narayana, the Eternal Lord and His one eternal Consort ever linked to His side as His Counter-Whole. Lakshmi is found to be the medium of all well-being.

Personality is conjoined with sex in the experience derived through our limited senses. The principle of sex need not, therefore, be dismissed as necessarily inapplicable to the Absolute. Male and female run through all physical Nature

binding together its jarring elements in a union of wonderful harmony. Why should the sex be regarded as less indispensable in the Realm of the Absolute?

The principle of personality implies the co-existence of a specific free will and its possessor. Thus stated it would seem to exclude all reference to sex. The will is found to be the same in both male and female in this world. Sex does not seem to modify the specific nature of the individual will. It is perfectly possible to conceive a female form being endowed with the will of a male or vice versa. The factor of the sex seems to lie on the surface. As Godhead and the individual soul are ordinarily identified as regards their essence with the cognitive principle itself it is imagined to be in keeping with such identification not to admit the presence of the sex principle in Godhead.

This is, however, merely the psychological explanation of the genesis of the view that ultimately favours the idea of impersonality. But impersonality cannot stand on its own legs; it necessarily implies the personal. God should include both. He should be both personal and impersonal. But He could not be positively real without being personal. The negative quality can be but a background but cannot itself be the picture. The impersonal idea is at best of the nature of an inferential surmise of the Reality from an unrecognisable distance. The closer view relieves us from the necessity of retaining the dogmas of impersonality and abstraction.

Why should not Godhead be a Person. Why should He not be Male or Female? Why should He be only sexless? As a Person why should He possess no Form corresponding to our physical body? And corresponding to these arise the questions "Why have I a sex. Is the sex a constituent of my present personality? Would my personality suffer by elimination of sex? What connection has the principle of sex with the physical body? Will my personality be modified by any change in the physical body?" These and similar questions lie at the very basis of the individual life.

The rational attitude should be to recognise the fact of the sex and to admit the existence of a corresponding spiritual principle. But it is not possible for a person on the strength of mundane knowledge to form any idea of the nature of the spiritual principle. We are sometimes disposed to think that it is given to us to approach the Absolute by way of service in certain forms. The issue of sex gives the direct lie to any such supposition. It shows clearly that it is never possible to rise from the physio-mental plane to the spiritual. This of course holds also in the

case of similar empirical assumption regarding any other principle of spiritual service.

But we can understand by the parity of reason that the principle must exist in an inconceivable form. We are supported by the Scriptures. Sreemad Bhagavatam makes the subject its central topic, round which all other topics are made to turn. The principle is found to occupy a correspondingly important position in the life of man in this world. So there is nothing peculiar or objectionable about the position. The objection of purists is due to the ignorance of the full claim of the Absolute.

By means of argument alone we cannot go beyond the point that we have now reached. The sex is found to be admissible in the Absolute. But the nature of the Personality of the Divine Couple, Sree Sree Lakshmi-Narayana, is otherwise unintelligible to the limited understanding. Its knowledge can only be received by grace and is, therefore, a matter of actual realisation on the path of spiritual endeavour.

We, therefore, reach the conclusion that the Divinity is a Transcendental Person. His Personality manifests Himself to us at first as that of a Male. This is the realisation of Divinity as Sree Vasudeva. But on closer acquaintance we find His fuller Form of the Eternal Couple, viz., Sree Sree Lakshmi-Narayana. Sree Narayana appears as the Lord, Sree Lakshmi as His Consort. Sree Narayana is the Wielder and Sree Lakshmi is the Executrix of the Divine Will. Sree Narayana manifests all His Activities through His Counter-Whole. This is the nature of relationship between the Divine Couple.

The Sanskrit word "Shakti" expresses the spiritual principle that corresponds to the female. The word may be rendered as "Energy" "Potency" or "Power". Sree Lakshmi is Divine Power. The personality of Power is feminine, that of the Possessor of Power is Masculine. Godhead is the Possessor of infinite Power. Power is not dissociable from her Possessor. In this sense Divine Power is identical with Godhead. But Godhead is more than His Power. He is the Source and Wielder of Power.

In exercise of His Power Godhead is realised as Couple. Godhead is fully realised as co-existing with His eternal Consort. The nearest physical analogy is that of the Sun in the embrace of the assemblage of heat and light. Neither light nor heat

is the Sun who is their otherwise unknowable Source. They are manifestations of the potency of the Sun. It is not possible to describe the relationship of Power with the Source of all Power in terms of any mental or physical experience. It is possible only to indicate it by way of an extremely imperfect analogy.

The Eternal Consort of Godhead co-exists with Godhead. She is the predominated moiety of the Absolute. The predominating moiety is her Lord and Master, Godhead Himself. This is the fuller idea of the Divine Personality. In the soul of man there also exists will in the embrace of power but both of them in an infinitesimally small measure. This smallness of his magnitude is realised by the individual soul by the service of the Divine Couple. It is possible for the soul of the jiva to try to live on his own paltry resources. This leads to a wrong estimate of his place and function in the Absolute. The point of view that such a course produces is responsible for the misdirection of the soul's activities in the state of self-elected willful ignorance that is to be found in this world.

So there is progressive revelation of the nature of the Divinity on the path of pure spiritual service. The upward tendency is towards realisation of the nature of the full scope of all the concrete relationships imperfectly mirrored in the deluding correspondences of this world, by the soul of man. In this world it is given only to man to have a corresponding existence. The soul of man is thus truly the centre of the phenomenal cosmos. This is not the case with any other sentient being, either higher or lower, of this world. The beings of apparently more favoured mundane worlds live under conditions that are less favourable for the realisation of the Absolute. This is due to the fact that they find their position more enjoyable. For the opposite reason the beings of lower worlds or stages are also placed in a worse position than man with reference to the Absolute.

These infinite gradations of life also exist as their corresponding realities in the realm of the Absolute, enveloping the human personality by their serving activities and affording necessary guidance for the realisation of the most perfect service that is found also here on the plane that corresponds to that of humanity. Sree Sree Lakshmi-Narayana are Objects of worship of this spiritual human plane. They enable us to attain the realisation of the concrete relationship of human service in its diffident forms. The development of the serving principle leads gradually to the inner and more concrete planes of the worship of Rama-Sita, of Sree Krishna in Dwaraka, of Sree Krishna in Mathura and finally of Sree Krishna in Brindabana.

The word "rasa" means that which produces the sensation of "taste" in its most comprehensive sense. That which imparts to human life the quality of being tasted by its possessor is the most fundamental of all principles of value of life. The range and quality of the realised taste-imparting principle is the cause of the desire for and bliss of existence. Man lives here in this world on the sweets and bitters of his mundane sojourn. If he is deprived of this faculty of taste, life is rendered meaningless and contemptible.

The leavening principle points to the sexual relationship as one of its cardinal references. This is consciously realisable by most persons in their actual relationships in this world. But the sexual relationship, although capable of being reached by way of argument as forming directly or indirectly the basis of all sweetness and bitterness on the mundane plane, is itself apprehended as a dangerous, delicate and unintelligible subject. It is also the basis of the taste of grossness in its most unwholesome forms.

The worship of Godhead is realisable in terms of the quality of spiritual taste evoked and fostered by His service. The relationships of this world, supplied by their deluding correspondence, give a clue to the spiritual quality but they can never give any substantive idea of the reality which is free from all possibility of unwholesomeness. In fact it is the attitude of the individual soul that is the cause of all experience of unwholesomeness born of limited vision. As the scope of vision of the individual expands he realises an increasing freedom from the sense of unwholesomeness. But this does not apply to the mundane plane where the so called expansion of empiric knowledge (?) tends to multiply ignorance and the possibility of unlimited grossness.

The conclusion to which such considerations tend to lead may be stated in the following manner. Spiritual life is categorically different from the mundane. No activity on the mundane plane by its mere dimension or manipulation, can ever lead to the Absolute. The difference between the mundane and spiritual function, may be indicated by the corresponding difference of attitude towards the Absolute on the part of the individual soul.

The mundane attitude is that of a desire to lord it over the Absolute. The spiritual attitude is that of service by the process of unconditional enlightening submission to the Absolute. In proportion as submission to the Absolute tends to be perfected by practice under the guidance of the Absolute, the scope of the spiritual vision of

the individual expands and produces a corresponding progressive excellence of the tasting process. Judged by this standard the service of Sree Sree Radha-Govinda is the perfection of bliss attainable by the individual soul.

Not that Sree Sree Radha-Govinda is essentially different from Lord Vasudeva. They are one and the same, being the Divinity Himself. But the worshipper of Lord Vasudeva does not possess the full scope of spiritual vision. He can, however, obtain the expanded vision only by the faithful service of Lord Vasudeva and by His grace.

The faithful servant of Lord Vasudeva will find in the Object of his worship Sree Sree Lakshmi-Narayana, Sree Sree Rama-Sita, Sree Sree Dwarakesha-Rukminisha-Krishna, Sree Sree Mathuresha-Krishna and finally Sree Sree Radha-Krishna in Brindabana.

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क्रिश्ह क्रिश्ह क्रिश्ह क्रिश्ह क्रिश्ह नाम कीर्त्तनम्
 राम राम गान रम्य दिव्य च्छन्द नर्त्तनम्
 यत्र तत्र क्रिश्ह नाम दान लोक निस्तरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

22

kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇa-nāma-kīrttanam
 rāma-rāma-gāna-ramya-divya chanda-narttanam
 yatra-tatra-kṛṣṇa-nāma-dāna-loka-nistaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Chanting "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Krishna," and sometimes "Rama, Rama", infused with an inconceivable type of joy, the Lord danced and called out to Krishna, asking Krishna to reveal his presence. The footsteps of Sri Chaitanya were a joyful dance, and Sri Chaitanya's eyes and hands expressed wonderful gestures, full of meaning and deep significance. Sri Chaitanya called out to Krishna, asking Krishna to appear and fill up the void that is felt in Krishna's absence. When walking along roads and lonely pathways, or visiting temples or the homes of people he met during his tour of South India, Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya inspired everyone to become a devotee.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Hare Krishna Mahamantra
 by Srila Bhakti Saranga Goswami Maharaj

The text-

Harey Krishna Harey Krishna
 Krishna Krishna Harey Harey
 Harey Rama Harey Rama
 Rama Rama Harey Harey

The nomenclature of the Absolute has been put in this rhyme as Krishna. Krishna literally means That Most Beautiful Personality Who attracts all beings and gives joy. The form of Krishna is His inconceivable simultaneous personal and impersonal, self-contradictory Form. True devotees see that Form in their purified hearts under the influence of Devotional Trance. Rama is His other Name, conveying the idea of His being perpetually engaged in His transcendental revels with His excellent servitors led by His Consort called Hara (Radha).

These three Holy Words, viz..(1) Harey (Hara), (2) Krishna and (3) Rama, have been repeated over and over again addressing the Divine Couple in a systematic order which is realized by pure devotees when, by the grace of the Name, they see the Lord in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of Divine Love, the seed of which is planted in the soul through these Holy Words by the Guru (an Absolute-realized soul who is authorized to act as a Divine Intermediary).

The seed of devotion that is implanted in the soul by the mercy of the Guru and the Supreme Lord, if properly watered by the hearing and chanting of these Holy Words, sprouts forth into a tender creeper of devotion which by her progressive growth enables us to transcend the successive planes of (1) the mundane sphere of active opposition to the Absolute (2) 'Biroja' (Viraja, or Nirvana), the sphere of universal scepticism, and (3) Brahmaloce, or the sphere of dim reflection of transcendental knowledge; till finally we come face to face to the Most Beautiful Personality of Krishna Who is indetical with His Name, Form, Attributes, Activities and Entourages.

The Harey Krishna rhyme of Holy Words is the visualized symbol of the revealed Transcendental Sound originating from the Holy Lips of Krishna - the Primary Source of all Gurus, all transcendental authorities or means of obtaining Divine Knowledge. He is the eye of eyes and the illuminator of sight and other sense organs.

As the hub is the centre of the spokes of a wheel, so Krishna is the eternal core of created beings including Brahma - the creator of this world who first heard the Holy Words and realized their meaning - the drops of Truth forming the stream of the Divine Sound which flowed in disciplic order through the ears, hearts and lips of Narad (Brahma's disciple) and Vyas (Narad's disciple) to the present Gurus -

the reservoirs of pure drinking water to quench our spiritual thirst. Shrutee (Vedas) reveals Herself through Guru - the Divine Transparent Agent - to sincere souls purified by the Transcendental Sound - the basis upon which religion is built and the root from which it grows.

These Holy Words are known as the Mahamantra (greatest rhyme of Transcendental Sound), by which the sacrifice of the chanting of the Lord's Holy Name is to be performed.

This Mahamantra is used in this iron age as the transcendental escalator to transport us up to God. This Mahamantra takes us back to our eternal Home away from this world of tribulations where we have been caged due to having misused our free will at the outset. We are now averse to the loving service of the Lord which is the proper function of all individual souls.

The Lord eternally manifests Himself in the Form of the Name through the medium of His plenery servitors, the Gurus, for the deliverance of fallen souls, as we have no access to the Spiritual World through our empiric knowledge.

२३

गोदवर्ष्य वाम तीर रामानन्द सम्बदम्
 ज्ञान कर्म मुक्त मर्म राग भक्ति सम्पदम्
 पारकीय कान्त क्रिष्ण ब्हाव सेवनाकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

23

godavaryya-vāma-tīra-rāmānanda-samvadam
 jñāna-karmma-mukta-marmma-rāga-bhakti-sampadam
 pārakīya-kānta-kṛṣṇa-bhāva-sevanākaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

In Chaitanya Charitamrita, written by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami, there is a record of the conversation between Sri Krishna Chaitanya and Ramananda Raya which is known as *ramananda samvad*. In that conversation the highest form of dedication to Sri Krishna is described as loving devotion in the mellow of parakiya-rasa. Pure love for Krishna is loving devotion free from any attraction for any thing other than Krishna - the desire to engage in dutiful religious practices in a mood of awe-filled adoration, or the desire to worship God for personal gain, are both lesser types of devotion, while ecstatic devotion of the highest form is to be found only in the type of exclusive devotion exhibited by the Gopis in Vrindaban.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Ramananda Samvad by Srila Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

Ramananda Raya was a married man, but he was recognized by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as a master of his senses to the extreme degree. Once a brahmana priest named Pradyumna Misra came to Mahaprabhu and told Him, "I would like to hear about Krishna from Your lips." Mahaprabhu said, "I do not know anything about Krishna, but Ramananda Raya knows. Go to him and hear about Krishna. Take My name, and perhaps he will talk with you."

Pradyumna Misra was hesitant, but he went and observed Ramananda Raya for some time and then returned and reported to Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu asked him, "Have you heard about Krishna from Ramananda? "No." "Why?" "I saw him engaged in something objectionable. I watched for some time, and then returned here." "What did you see?" Pradyumna Misra said, "I saw Ramananda Raya training some young dancing girls!"

Girls who are generally devoted to the service of the Jagannatha Deity from a young age are known as deva-dasis. They do not marry, and sometimes their character is not very good. Pradyumna Misra saw Ramananda Raya training deva-dasis in a very objectionable way. He was showing them how to go before the Jagannatha Deity and dance and sing. He showed them how their posture should be, how they should gesture, and how their looks should be enticing. And for such training he would sometimes even touch their private parts. So Pradyumna Misra told Mahaprabhu, "Seeing Ramananda doing all these things, I had no regard for him, so for some time I saw him busily engaged in that matter, and then I went away."

Mahaprabhu told him, "Don't underestimate Ramananda Raya. He is the master of his senses. There is not a tinge of craft in him. Even I feel trouble from sense disturbance within Me, but Ramananda has no such trouble. We have no direct experience that a stage can be attained where it is possible to be above mundane sense pleasure, but we have only heard through the scriptures that there is a stage when a man may transcend all these gross attachments. This is mentioned in the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.33.39):

*vikriditam vraja-vadhubhir idam ca visnoh
sraddhanvito 'nusrnuyad atha varnayed yah
bhaktim param bhagavati pratilabhya kamam
hrd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena dhirah*

"One who hears with firm faith the supramundane amorous affairs of Lord Krishna and the gopis, as described by a pure devotee of the Lord, soon becomes freed from mundane lust and achieves divine love of Krishna."

One may be engaged bodily in such activities, while his heart is elsewhere. And there is only one who is of that type: Ramananda Raya. There are not big

numbers of Ramanandas; there is only one Ramananda, who has acquired such a stage because he is well-versed in the kind of sentiment and realization which is necessary for the service of Krishna and the gopis. His heart is completely dedicated to the cause of Krishna; He has no selfish interest. He is always in Krishna consciousness, and whatever he does is for Krishna's satisfaction, so don't think ill of him. Go there again."

Then Pradyumna Misra again went to see Ramananda Raya, and Ramananda began their conversation by saying "Oh, on that day I could not oblige you. But again you have come to hear about Krishna. How fortunate I am!" In the morning, Ramananda Raya began to speak, and when the afternoon came, still he was madly talking about Krishna. He completely forgot about eating, bathing, or anything else. He was mad, incessantly speaking of Krishna. Then, when it was late, his servants came twice, thrice, to ask him to take bath and eat his dinner, and finally, he had to leave the talk and go. Then Pradyumna Misra returned to Mahaprabhu and said, "Yes, I have heard from Ramananda Raya, and my heart is full from hearing about Krishna from him."

Mahaprabhu Himself had heard from Ramananda Raya, and He said, "Ramananda knows what is Krishna. What I taught to Rupa and Sanatana, I heard from Ramananda." It is mentioned that Mahaprabhu took diksa, initiation, from Isvara Puri; for preaching purposes he took sannyasa, the renounced order, from Kesava Bharati; and for entrance into the transcendental pastimes of Krishna in Vrndavana, He took raga marga initiation from Ramananda Raya. Of course, Isvara Puri, Kesava Bharati, and Ramananda Raya never thought of themselves as the guru of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. But it was seen that Mahaprabhu treated Ramananda with some respect. It is mentioned in the Chaitanya-charitamrita (Madhya 8.204) that if one wants to enter into the spontaneous devotion of Krishna's pastimes in Vraja, it is required that he take shelter of a confidential maidservant in conjugal mellow, madhurya rasa (sakhi vina ei lilaya anyera nahi gati). They are masters of that situation. The whole storehouse of this madhurya lila is in the hands of those maidservants. Only they can give it to others. In madhurya rasa, the guru is seen in the form and spirit of a sakhi, a maidservant of Radharani (guru rupa sakhi). Ramananda Raya was Visakha-sakhi, the right-hand personal attendant of Srimati Radharani.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu gives us a hint of the necessity of approaching a confidential associate of Srimati Radharani when he says to Ramananda kiba vipra, kiba nyasi sudra kene naya, yei krsna-tattva vetta sei 'guru' haya: "Why do you shrink away from instructing Me? I am learning so much from you. You are well-versed in the affairs of Krishna, so you are guru; therefore I am hearing from you. Whoever is the master of that storehouse of krsna-lila, and whoever can distribute it - he is guru; of this, there is no doubt."

The famous talks between Ramananda Raya and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took place on the banks of the Godavari river. The name Godavari is significant, for it indicates that place where the highest fulfillment of our spiritual senses was given. The fullest engagement of all our senses was announced there on the banks of the Godavari: "Your senses are not to be rejected. If you can give up the spirit of exploitation and renunciation, then your senses will have their fulfillment with Krishna. Those tendencies bar your approach to Krishna; to properly approach Krishna, you will have to utilize your senses to the fullest extent." That was dealt with on the banks of the Godavari.

There, in his famous conversations with Ramananda Raya, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began the approach to pure devotional service in a general and comprehensive way. This is recorded in the Madhya-lila of Chaitanyacharitamrita (8.51-313). He asked Ramananda Raya, prabhu kahe, - "pada sloka sadhyera nirnaya": "What is the ultimate goal of life? I not only want to hear your statements, but also evidence from the scriptures."

The answer came from Ramananda Raya: raya kahe, - "sva-dharmacarane visnu-bhakti haya." "Discharge your own duty, without expecting anything in return." Sva dharma means varnasrama dharma, Vedic social stratification. "You are posted in your present position by your previous karma. According to your present position, you have to discharge your duties on one condition: you must do them without remuneration. If you go on with your duties in varnasrama dharma, without any mundane aim, you can achieve visnu-bhakti, devotion to God. This is confirmed in the Visnu Purana (3.8.9):

*varnasramacaravata
purusena parah puman
vismur aradhyate pantha
nanyat tat-tosa-karanam*

"The only way to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu, is to worship Him by properly executing one's prescribed duties in the social system of varna and asrama." Here, Ramananda Raya says that visnu-bhakti, adherence to the Lord who is permeating everything, is the object and ultimate destination of our life. This is the Vasudeva conception: everything is in Him, and He is everywhere. Ramananda explained that from our local interests, we must come to embrace the general interest, and that must reach the level of Visnu consciousness: visnu-bhakti. Our submission to Visnu, the internal spirit who is everywhere, is the object of life. We must connect with Him and live accordingly; not a phenomenal life, but a spiritual life pertaining to a deeper, more subtle plane.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "This is superficial; go deeper." Of course, it may be thought that actual theistic life begins from here, giving up the special, local purpose, and acting for a universal purpose, as already ordered and programmed in the Vedas and Upanisads. But Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "This is superficial; go deeper."

Then, Ramananda Raya said, *krsne karmarpana - sarvasadhya-sara*: "To offer the results of one's activities to Krishna is the essence of all perfection." In *varnasrama dharma*, it is the fashion that people are generally engaged in external activities and do not care to give up the fruits of their action. Even if they do, they have no direct consciousness of Visnu or Krishna. They worship the goddess Durga, perform the *sraddha* funeral ceremony and execute so many other religious practices. Indirectly, it is ultimately connected with Visnu. They may or may not know how, but the link is there. That is the general conception of *varnasrama*, but here, Ramananda says that it will be better to have direct consciousness that Krishna is the authority. All the results of whatever we do within the *varnasrama* social system must be given to Krishna. If we perform all our physical, social, national and spiritual activities in Krishna consciousness, then we can approach the fulfillment of our goal in life.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said "This is superficial; go deeper." Then Ramananda Raya revealed new light, (quoting the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.66): *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*, "Give up all your duties, and just surrender to Me." We must be particular with the object of life; not the external activities of

varnasrama. Less importance should be given to the form of our activity: whether I am a king, a brahmana intellectual, or a worker does not matter. We may think, "I have this sort of duty, I have that sort of duty," but that does not matter very much. We must have no attachment for that. The king may leave his kingdom and take to a brahmanic life of renunciation and austerity. A sudra may give up his labor, become a beggar, and chant the name of Krishna. A brahmana may give up his performance of sacrifice and become a mendicant. So, we are to be particular about the aim of life; not the form of our duty. We must exclusively devote ourselves to the cause of the Lord, ignoring our present paraphernalia and duty.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "This is also superficial; go ahead - deeper." Then, Ramananda Raya explained jnana-misra bhakti, devotional service mixed with knowledge, by quoting from the Bhagavad-gita (18.54) where Krishna says:

*brahma-bhutam prasannatma
na socati na kanksati
samah sarvesu bhutesu
mad-bhaktim labhate param*

One who has come to the stage of identifying himself with spirit above matter has nothing to do with this mundane world. Any loss or gain in this mundane world is of no use to him. He is spirit; his prospect is in the world of soul, and he has nothing to do with this material world, whether it is laudable or blamable. He is already settled in the consciousness that he is soul proper and has nothing to do with matter, so within himself he feels satisfaction. He is atmarama: self-content; he neither mourns, nor aspires for anything. If something is lost, does he mourn? No. He thinks, "This is nothing; it is only matter." And when something is gained, he is not overly cheerful, because it is only matter; it is unnecessary and unimportant. Now true devotional service can begin; his soul can begin living in the spiritual plane, with a pure serving attitude, unmixed with any mundane aspiration. When one attains the spiritual platform, he gets the opportunity to practice a higher type of service.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "This is also superficial. Such a person is only on the verge of devotional service; he has no substantial touch of devotion. He has not entered the domain of bhakti; he is just waiting in the marginal position, at the door. He may attain bhakti, but he has not yet achieved it. His negative forces are finished, but still, he is just at the door; he has not yet entered. He may

enter; he may not enter. From there, if he gets anything, it will be pure, but he is still at the door.

Ramananda Raya then said, *jñane prayasam udapasya namanta eva*: "It is a very difficult thing to cross the charm of knowledge." We think, "I want to understand everything first, and then I shall act." Calculation and an underlying suspicion is there. Before we act, we want to know everything fully; only then will we risk our capital. The ego, the "I" is very strong, and he wants to have an account of his loss and gain. He thinks, "I am the master. The key is in my hand, I want to test everything, I want to know it all. I know what is good for me." So, we think ourselves masters, not servants, and from the position of a master we make our inquiry.

But this calculating mentality must be given up if we at all want to enter into the domain of the Lord, where everything is superior to us. No one there will care to come to us with an explanation, thinking that we are their master. They will not reassure us by saying, "Yes, there will be no loss; your gain will be big." We may think, "I am an independent separate entity, so in my account there must be no loss. I must stand here with my head erect," but that won't do. We are to go there as slaves, not masters. That sort of mentality is necessary: we must bow down our heads. Not that with our heads erect we will march over everything, but everything there is superior in quality to us.

So, we have to enter into that transcendental land, where even the earth, water, air, and whatever we will find, is made of higher materials than we ourselves are made of. They are all guru, and we are disciples. They are all masters, and we are servants; we have to enter the land where everything is our master. We will have to submit; that will be our real qualification. What we will be ordered to do, we will have to do. We are not to exercise our brain so much there. The brain has no room there; they are all brainier than we. Our brain is unnecessary there; only our hands are necessary. Menial labor is necessary there. Brain there is enough. We are to enter that land if we like. It is a land of slavery for us. So, we are to hatefully dismiss our brains, and taking only our hearts, we must approach and enter that land.

We should think, "I am as insignificant as a mosquito," just as Lord Brahma did when he went to Dwaraka to visit Lord Krishna. And it is not only for the time being; not that one will accept a humble attitude, finish his work and then come

back. No. We will have to accept such an insignificant position eternally. Of course, we may expect to be educated about Krishna consciousness: how it is good, how it is great, how it is useful to us. We will be allowed pariprasna: honest inquiry. In the transcendental realm, everyone is our friend. They will come to help us, to make us understand that devotional service is beautiful, and that Krishna consciousness is the best form of life. Our aspiration and purity of purpose is to be valued; not our external position. The recruiters from that side will consider our purity of purpose, not so much our present position and capacity.

And although apparently it seems that we are going to be slaves, the result is just the opposite. If you can accept such an attitude of surrender and slavery, then He who can never be conquered will be conquered. Friends will come and help you, the sadhus will come and make you understand that we should become slaves, that Krishna likes His slaves very much. He is the master of slaves, and sometimes He wants to become the slave of His slaves (gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah). This is the key to success, and we can achieve the highest gain through this attitude.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu told Ramananda Raya, "Yes, this is true. The unconquerable is conquered by surrender. We can capture Him. I accept this as the beginning plane of divine love: by giving we can get as much as we risk. As much as we risk to give ourselves, so much we can demand from that unconquerable infinite." Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I accept this as the beginning of suddha-bhakti, pure devotional service. But go farther."

Ramananda Raya explained that from there pure devotional service develops in a crude form, in a general way, and when it is more mature, it must take the shape of santa, neutrality, dasya, servitorship, sakhya, friendship, vatsalya, paternal affection, and madhurya rasa, conjugal love. In santa rasa, there is adherence, nistha: one thinks, "I cannot withdraw myself from this consciousness of continuous submission to the truth. Neutrality develops into dasya rasa, the desire to do some service. When a devotee is not satisfied by only sitting, showing loyalty to the Supreme Authority, he wants to be utilized by Him. He awaits the Lord's order, praying that the Lord may give him some engagement. When a devotee has such deep penetration that he wants to be utilized in any way by the Lord, that is known as dasya rasa, or devotion in the mood of service. Then there is sakhya rasa: devotional service in friendship.

When, in dasya rasa, confidence is added to service, then it becomes a little superior. Generally old servants who are faithful become confidential servants, so when the confidential stage is added to service, it becomes sakhya rasa, or devotional service as a friend of the Lord. First there is nistha, adherence, submission, then the devotee wants to be utilized for His satisfaction, then there is confidential utilization, and then it comes to friendly service, sakhya rasa. In Vaikuntha, where Lord Narayana is served in calculative devotion, only santa rasa, dasya rasa, and half of sakhya rasa are seen. Full confidence is not possible there. Awe, reverence, splendor, grandeur, pomp, apprehension - all these vanish when we develop a more confidential relationship with the Supreme Lord. At that time, the object of our worship or love changes in another way. Then from Vaikuntha, we feel attraction for Ayodhya, the divine abode of Lord Ramacandra, where there is neutrality, servitorship, and friendship with Vibisana and Sugriva. There, we can also trace vatsalya rasa, parental love of Godhead.

In vatsalya rasa, confidence has developed to the peculiar stage in which the servitors think themselves promoted to the post of protecting the object of their veneration. Filial affection is also service. Although it seems that the parents are masters of the situation, controlling the Lord as their son, sometimes chastising and punishing Him, this is a superficial view. If we can enter into the depth of their service, we shall find an incomparable love of a most peculiar type. On the surface, they are engaged in punishing and rebuking the Lord; underground, they are full of interest for the welfare of the object of their service. Vatsalya, or parental love of Godhead, is a peculiar type of divine love. We see a very light type of vatsalya in Ayodhya, so it is almost ignored.

Rupa Goswami leaped from Vaikuntha to Mathura in one stride. In his Upadesamrta (9), he writes: *Vaikunthaj janito vara madhu-puri tatrapa rasotsavad.* "Mathura is superior to Vaikuntha because Lord Sri Krishna appeared there." It is there that everything is shown in a clear and substantial way. In Mathura we find the Krishna conception of Godhead. In one stride he has come from Vaikuntha to the Krishna conception, but Sanatana Goswami has filled up the gap. In his book, *Brhad-bhagavatamrta*, he says that on the way to Mathura there is Ayodhya, the spiritual kingdom of Lord Rama, and there we find sakhya and vatsalya rasa.

But Rupa Goswami goes to Mathura at once. He says, "Come to Mathura; here you will find sakhya and vatsalya rasa clearly visible. He has shown how sakhya rasa service is present there. The devotees there are playing with Krishna, sometimes climbing on His shoulders, and perhaps sometimes even giving Him a slap. But, although they may mix with Him in this way, their heart is full of a peculiar type of service attitude. That is the criterion: they may give up their lives a thousand times to take a thorn out of His sole. They can sacrifice themselves a thousand times for the slightest satisfaction of their friend. They consider Him a thousand times more valuable than their own life. In vatsalya rasa also, the criterion is similar: for the slightest interest of the object of their veneration they can give their lives millions of times. Such affection is found there.

And then, from vatsalya, it progresses to conjugal love (madhurya rasa), the all-comprehensive rasa which includes adherence (santa-nistha), service (dasya), friendly confidence (sakhya), and parental love (vatsalya rasa). But the wholesale dedication of every atom of our existence for Krishna's satisfaction is found in madhurya rasa, which includes all other rasas.

And madhurya rasa is more enhanced when it is couched in the form of parakiya, or paramour relationship. In parakiya rasa, the gopis risk everything for the service of Krishna. Parakiya rasa takes two forms: in one, there is no obligation of anything; the union may happen or may not happen. So, because their meeting is very rare, it becomes even sweeter. There is another kind of parakiya rasa: we are told that ordinary food is not palatable to Krishna, but when He takes food by stealing, that is more tasteful to Him. If we can follow this art, that may also be applied in the case of parakiya rasa. "I am deceiving the party, getting what I want. I am stealing the property of someone else." That sort of posing becomes more tasteful to the subjective party.

And the dedicated party risks everything: their good name, society, future, and even the dictation of the religious scriptures. They take a wholesale risk, just as one time, when we were in Madras, the King of Jaipur gave some money for the construction of a temple. The money was sent to our head office in Calcutta. Out of 5,000 rupees, the first installment was 1,000 rupees, and the construction work was begun by sending a worker from our main center. Then, Madhava Maharaja and I were sent to Madras, where we heard that the king would soon come. In order to show him that some work had been done we raised the construction to some extent, so the king could be told, "Your money has been spent, and now the

next installment is necessary." In order to do this, we incurred a debt. We took a loan for bricks and other things and raised the construction to a higher level.

When we wrote this to our guru maharaja, we had some apprehension that he would chastise us: "Why have you taken this loan?" Instead of that, he gave us his appreciation: "You have risked your future in the service of Krishna. You have taken a loan, and that means you have to pay off that loan, so you have engaged your future energy in the service of Krishna. You will have to collect money and pay off the loan, so there is service with risk of the future." The gopis consciously risked their future: "We have disobeyed our superior persons and the directions of the Vedas; what we do is neither approved by society, nor by the religious books. Our future is dark." Still, they could not but serve Krishna.

So, *vaikunthaj janito vara madhu-puri tatrapi rasotsavad*. Janito means vatsalya rasa and madhurya rasa in Vrndavana: radha-kundam ihapi gokula-pateh. In the madhurya rasa also, three groups are shown: Vrndavana in general, selected groups in Govardhana, and the highest group in Radha-kunda. All these things have been shown in the conversation between Ramananda Raya and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

After this, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Go further." Then, Ramananda Raya began to explain the kind of service rendered by Radharani in madhurya rasa. Her devotional service is categorically higher than that of all the other gopis. Radham adhaya hrdaye tatyaja vraja sundarih (Gita-govinda 3.1 Jayadeva Goswami). The whole group of gopis can be canceled only for one: Srimati Radharani. What peculiar type of service may come from Her? And Krishna, the Original Personality of Godhead (svayam rupa) is only by the side of Radharani. By the side of other gopis, that is prabhava prakasa, a plenary expansion; not svayam rupa, the original form. Such is the quality of Srimati Radharani. We should show our highest reverence to this highest ideal of devotional service.

Then the last question came from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: "Can you think of anything more than this?" Then, Ramananda Raya said, "You asked me to quote scripture to support whatever I say, but here I won't be able to quote scripture from anywhere. Still, I have a new feeling within me, and if You would like to know that, I can explain it to You."

In this way, one song was composed by Ramananda Raya. He introduced this song by saying, "Whether or not it will be pleasing to You, I do not know, but it seems to me that there is a stage which is even better than the meeting of Radha and Govinda." There is a stage where both of Them, the positive and negative are combined, no individual consciousness is clear, and one is searching another in self-forgetfulness.

This searching of one party by the other is very strong and intense. This seems to be a more highly elevated love: union in separation. Radha and Govinda are so intense in Their search of one another that even They have no consciousness of whether They have each other. Radharani sometimes experiences that even while Krishna is present before Her, She fears losing Him; that feeling becomes as intense as if She has lost Him. They are together, but the apprehension that one may lose the other makes their meeting intolerably painful, just as a mother is always alert about the safety of her son (anistasankini bandhu-hrdayani bhavanti hi). A mother thinks, "Oh, my son is out - is he in an accident?" This fear of separation is the symptom of deep love.

Ramananda Raya's composition gave a hint about the divine appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in which both Radha and Govinda are combined, and it is as if they are unconscious of Their separate existence. One is searching the other, Krishna Himself is overflowing with the feelings of Radharani, and They are so deeply embraced that one is lost in the other. Then, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu put His palm over the mouth of Ramananda Raya, and told him, "No further." *Rasa-raja maha bhava - dui eka rupa.*

Lord Sri Krishna is the fountainhead of all pleasure, and Srimati Radharani is the embodiment of ecstatic love of Godhead. These two forms are united as one in Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Mahaprabhu replied, "Oh, because you are a cent percent devotee, wherever you cast your glance you see only Krishna; nothing else. The object of your interest is represented everywhere." Ramananda Raya said, "My Lord, don't deceive me in this way. You have come here so graciously to purify this mean person, and if You act diplomatically now, it will not look well for You. I won't hear what You say; come out with Your real position. Who are You?" Mahaprabhu said, "By dint of your loving devotion, you can know everything in this world; nothing can be concealed from your loving eye." *Premanjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena.*

Then, Mahaprabhu revealed Himself: "When you see Me to be externally of a golden color, it is not so. It is by the touch of the color of Radharani. And who can Radharani touch and closely embrace? She will never touch anyone except Krishna. So, now you know who I am: Rasaraja - ecstasy Himself, and Mahabhava - the one who can taste that highest rasa. See how They mingle together!"

Ramananda Raya fainted and fell flat on the floor. He could not keep his senses. Then by the touch of His hand, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again brought him to his senses. Ramananda returned to his previous stage of consciousness and saw a sannyasi sitting before him. After a short pause, Mahaprabhu said, "Remain here, I am going."

Afterwards, Ramananda Raya and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had some other talks, and Mahaprabhu said, "Ramananda, as long as I live I want your company." Ramananda replied, "Yes, I must take shelter of Your Divine feet and live there for the rest of my life."

Ramananda later made arrangements with the King of Orissa to retire from his post as Governor of Madras and came to Jagannatha Puri. For almost two years, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu wandered about the holy places of Southern and Western India and at last returned to Puri. There they again met.

After this, Mahaprabhu went to Vrndavana through Bengal. Six years passed, and Advaita Prabhu almost gave leave to Mahaprabhu, saying, "Our pastimes of introducing the chanting of Hare Krishna are finished." Then Mahaprabhu continuously showed Radharani's mood of tasting krsna-prema, ecstatic love of Krishna, for twelve years. Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya, who are Lalita and Visakha, the two principle gopi assistants of Radharani, were Mahaprabhu's most important company during that time.

There, so many things about the deep feelings of Divine love have been shown. It has never been found in the history of the world, or even expressed in any scripture how such intense love within can produce such corresponding symptoms on the surface. That was shown by Radharani and later shown by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

It was shown by Mahaprabhu in His practices also, how krsna prema, love of Krishna, can play a man like a doll. Sometimes His legs and hands would enter inconceivably into His body, and sometimes His joints would disconnect and His transcendental body would appear elongated. Sometimes His whole body would become white, and He would lay unconscious, breathing so slowly that His breath could not be traced. In this way, He exhibited many amazing symptoms of ecstasy.

Svarupa Damodara, the personal secretary of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has explained the meaning of His appearance in his memoirs, which were recorded in the Chaitanya-charitamrita of Kaviraja Goswami. He writes:

*radha krsna-pranaya-vikrtir hladini saktir asmad
ekatmanav api bhuvi pura deha-bhedam gatau tau
caitanyakhyam prakatam adhuna tad-dvayam caikyam aptam
radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam naumi krsna-svarupam*

Sometimes Radha and Krishna are combined; sometimes They are separate. They are separate in Dvapara-yuga, and in Kali-yuga they are combined as Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Both are eternal expressions of the same Absolute Truth. Summer, autumn, winter, and spring continue in a cyclic order; it cannot be said that summer is the beginning and winter comes later. So, the pastimes of Sri Radha and Krishna are eternally being enacted. In ancient times, sometimes Radha and Krishna divided Themselves and showed Their pastimes; again both of Them, the potency and the owner of the potency, are combined and closely embraced as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The predominating and the predominated moiety are mixed, and an extraordinary ecstatic feeling is there. Krishna is overpowered by His potency, and He Himself is searching after His own Self: krsnasya atmanusandhana. Krishna Himself is engaged in the search for Sri Krishna, Reality the Beautiful. The influence of Radharani over Krishna has transformed Him into a devotee, and He is searching Himself. Sweetness is tasting Itself and becoming mad. And it is living sweetness; not dead or static, but dynamic ecstasy - sweetness endowed with life.

And He is tasting Himself, the personification of happiness, ecstasy, and beauty, and dancing in madness, and His performance of kirtana means distributing that ecstasy to others.

The ultimate sweetness, or ananda, is such that no other thing exists that can taste itself and express its own happiness with such intensity. I have described Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the Prema Dhama Deva Stotram:

*atma-siddha-sava lila-purna-saukhya-laksanam
svanubhava-matta-nrtya-kirtanatma-vantanam
advayaika-laksya-purna-tattva-tat-paratparam
prema-dhama-devam-eva naumi gaura-sundaram*

"The highest conception of the Absolute Truth must also be the highest form of ananda, ecstasy. Mahaprabhu's dancing indicates that He is full of ecstasy, and His kirtana is distribution of that rasa. So, if we scientifically search out who Mahaprabhu is, we cannot but find that He is the Ultimate Reality. He is mad in tasting His own internal nectar, and His dancing is the outcome of His transcendental ecstasy. And He is chanting, distributing that to others. So, studying quite closely the character of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, we cannot but think that He is the Supreme Absolute Truth, in its fullest, and most dynamic expression." (Verse 66)

२४

दास्य सक्त्वा वात्स्य कान्त सेवनोत्तरोत्तरम्
 श्रेष्ठह पारकीय रदिहकान्तिह भक्ति सुन्दरम्
 श्री व्रज स्व सिद्धह दिव्य काम क्रिश्ण तत्परम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

24

dāśya-sakhya-vātsya-kānta-sevanottarottaram
 śreṣṭha-pārakīya-radhikānghri-bhakti-sundaram
 śrī-vraja-sva-siddha-divya-kāma-kṛṣṇa-tatparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Krishna Chaitanya explained that there are various relationships in connection with Krishna. Those relationships begin with servitude and progress to friendship and to parental love, ultimately extending to an amorous relationship. Within the category of amorous love, the most beautiful form of loving devotion is pure devotional service to the lotus feet of Srimate Radharani in the moods of parakiya love for Sri Nandanandana (Krishna). Divine and spontaneous loving desires, in their most pure and pristine form, can have their full meaning only in the pastimes of Sri Vrajendranandana, Sri Krishna in Vraja Dham. Such inspiration was given by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Rai Ramananda

by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur

To determine the object of eternal love by the eternal true servitor, no foreign element is to be tentatively introduced to have a distraction from the Absolute Truth. Love may be effected in the five successively different stages by the lover to the loved. The very embodiment of love has the sole entity of inviting the eternal loved through their five different *ratis* innate in them. Whenever love is attempted from a lower level it has a necessary tinge of reverence. Love is the principal entity of uniting tie between the two. In mundane phenomena love is described as ephemeral and non-eternal. But when the lover and the loved are

both eternally reciprocated, such love is not to be confused with our present experience of denominating the mundane love. The subtle gaseous form, when condensed, is liquefied in the language of the scientist, and the liquid in its turn is solidified in the gradual development. From transcendental non-relativity love is traced to change its subtle form, taking the shape of unalloyed loving service to loving friendship and then to confidential loving friendship. The love becomes purer to concentrate itself to the filial object and reaches the acme in the object of consort. The tone is not changed, but the magnitude of service is augmented gradually step by step.

Ramananda, in describing the loving nature of devotion, cited a verse composed by him which showed the gradual increase of felicity in things which are eatable and drinkable as per the degree and quantity of hunger and thirst. This has analogy to adding more sauce to our serving mood of true love, which brings more enthusiasm.

Ramananda went on to cite another verse which was also his composition which purported to disclose the fact that no luck arising out of our action could be compared with the intense aptitude for having a service to Krishna and this is the exchanged value to secure in return for the ripe and soft relishing quality of Krishna's devotion and this should be secured at all costs when it could be had. Such a disposition is incomparable, with earned fortunes. This is spoken of as the base of *prema bhakti*.

To this the Supreme Lord expressed His approval and asked him to elucidate further. Service with loving temper has got a conspicuous aspect as distinct from the mere base. In this world we invite the objects to serve us and we have got the inner inclination of approving the adaptability of being served by others, as we are quite unaccustomed to find out the All-love Who has concealed Himself from us through our sensuous activities. So Ramananda exhibited the glaring phase of the pure service to the Personality of Godhead as the most interesting piece of function of the soul. The soul, now lying in a dormant condition, has delegated powers to the mind in order to take over the charge of meddling with the external world by lording it over mundane entities. But the temporal activity can have the permanent function if the loving aptitude is directed towards the All-love Who is the one without a second. As regards the aspects they will be dealt later on along with our ameliorating functions of love.

To support his statement Ramananda culled a passage of the *Bhagavatam* (9 Sk., 16 ch., 16 sl.) together with a passage from the hymns of Yamunacharya, "Nothing remains unavailable by the servitors who are purified by the aural reception of the transcendental Name of the very entity of holiness". Alavandar, in his lyrics, gave vent to the expression, "When will that day come when I will be in a position to please my Master, considering myself as an eternal unswerving slave, having dispelled all sorts of designs by my innate serving mood constantly."

The Supreme Lord approved this version of unalloyed service and solicited further progressive elucidation. Ramananda's answer was to target confidential service of a friend to the Personality of Godhead being the highest aim of a devotee. The question of neutrality is amplified in concerning the integral Absolute and the infinitesimal potency in the same line.

In support of his statement Ramananda culled a passage from the tenth *skanda* of the *Bhagavatam* (12th Chapter, 11th *sloka*) which ran to disclose the comparative situation of the unexpected fortune that is received by the cowherd-friends of Krishna which have excelled that of the ordinary servitors of the Absolute, the object of the transcendental ecstatic felicity realized by the sojourners of the tract of knowledge.

The Supreme Lord was showing His approval when He heard of the confidential loving service superior to menial service from the lips of Ramananda. When the normal stage is exceeded it was approved not with toleration but with definite and positive assertion. But the Supreme Lord said, "The confidential service is no doubt better than that of the service-holders. Still you are to advance a little more."

So Ramananda had to disclose his heart more in speaking out filial love for Krishna which is higher and nobler than the confidential friendship. To bear testimony to his assertion he culled two more verses from the tenth chapter of the tenth *skandha* of the *Bhagavatam*, "The glory achieved by the parents in serving the Absolute Personality of Godhead exhibited the two incidents of comparative fortune of the parents. What led Nanda and Yasoda to avail the parental situation of the Son-God and what were the incidents that led the unparalleled luck of Yasoda which induced the Son-God to suck her breast?" The fortune that was not available to the four-faced Brahma, five-faced Siva, the generating and the

destroying entity of the Absolute, nor to His spouse Laksmi who has such unprecedented favor, was received by the milk-maid from the dispenser of liberation. The Supreme Lord approved this disclosure with great sympathy, but asked him to proceed to the climax.

Ramananda in response to His query gave out that love of consort predominates over all other aspects of devotion. He recited two verses from the tenth *skandha* of the *Bhagavatam* to espouse the glorious position of the milkmaids who are the best of His subservients.

The love for the consort excels that of all loving servitors or loving parents. The intensity of affinity is the greatest in the milk-maids serving their consort. The ecstatic displays that are found in ladies towards their husbands, the temporal but incessant love of the goddesses towards their gods, the strongest affinity of the Lakshmis towards Narayana, cannot be compared with the ecstatic enthusiasm that was enjoyed by the milk-maids at the *rasa* pastime when every one of them were in the arms of each of variegated entities of Krishna. When the Gopis were cast into the depths of the ocean of grief by the conspicuous absence of Sri Krishna, He suddenly appeared before them with a smiling face wearing the yellow apparel, garlanded with flowers. His beautiful appearance was so overwhelmingly attractive that the most sublime beauty completely vanquished the very entity of aesthetic culture.

The combination of *hasya*, *adbhuta*, *karuna* *rasas* added to the delicious taste of *madhurya* which could not be compared with any other representation of the kind. There are various means by which the services of Krishna are attained and these variegated aspects can be judged with their respective merits. A servitor is to select, by his predilection, the acme of the function of his soul. But there is a distinctive reference of comparative study if we are not guided by a definite principle. A comparative scrutinization would certainly give us to know the additional qualities, as we find in examining ether, etc., augmented by successive additional attributes and reach the climax with the association of the five in the solid representation. The Personality of Godhead can only be had to accept our unalloyed loving service through love alone and not by reverential procedure. Sri Krishna being the very fountain-head of all resorts of *rasa*, He is ever prepared to welcome every servitor whoever he and whatever his serving procedure may be.

But if the object is distorted like our confusing Jehovah with Moloch and Moloch with Jehovah, we would certainly miss the kindly feelings of Krishna. This conception in scrutinizing ourselves will lead us astray from the true object. Our eternal functions and activities if misdirected will give us troubles and if we fail to determine Krishna, Who is the sole attractor of the unalloyed entities of souls, we will certainly miss to apprehend the process inculcated by Ramananda. Our wrong and erroneous promulgation will never enable us to get the best benefit that can be had by us if we fail to single out loving tenor to Krishna against *Dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha*, *i.e.*, by our limited propensity of limited elevation and salvation.

Ramananda, being further asked to subjoin the fullest reciprocity of *madhurya rasa*, advanced to delineate the counter reciprocal moiety of the whole by fixing the object in Sri Radhika. The highest step of devotion is displayed to serve the Pair and to utilize the full independence of the servitor to espouse the cause of the predominating aspect of the counter-whole by associating oneself in Her company. Ramananda was found to describe the situation of the paraphernalia and the transcendental duties congenial to confidential service of attending maids of Sri Radhika which completed the full narration of the manifestive position of amorous Pair.

२५

शान्त मुक्त ब्हित्य त्रिप्त मित्र मत्त दर्शितम्
 स्निग्दह मुग्दह शिशहत मिशहत सुशहत्ह कुन्ह हर्षितम्
 तन्त्र मुक्त वाम्य राग सर्व्व सेवनोत्तरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

25

śānta-mukta-bhṛtya-ṭṛpta-mitra-matta-darśitam
 snigdha-mugdha-śiṣṭa-miṣṭa-suṣṭha-kunṭha-harṣitam
 tantra-mukta-vāmya-rāga-sarvva-sevanottaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanyadev explained that a devotee in a mood of passive adoration enjoys the happiness of being free from all miseries. A devotee feeling a sense of servitude relishes the pleasure of contentment. A devotee feeling friendship becomes overwhelmed with happiness arising from close affection. While a devotee with parental feelings for Krishna is free from any calculative mentality, experiencing deepened affection in ecstatic joy. Sri Gaurasundara further revealed that the devotee feeling amorous love for Krishna in the category of wedded love (*svakiya*) only partially relishes the sweetness of the mood of love, due to constraints of scriptural, religious and moral codes on the relationship. However, when feelings of the highest type of loving devotion beyond scriptural restrictions are expressed (*parakiya*), then the spontaneity and freedom in the divine relationships is unlimited. Added with the special mood of vama, such service gives Krishna the greatest pleasure, providing full satisfaction for Sri Sri Radha-Govindasundar. The deep ocean of Srimati Radharani's love for Sri Krishna was explored by Sri Krishna Chaitanya, in the select company of his most confidential associates.
 I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

२६

आत्म नव्य तत्त्व दिव्य राय ब्हाग्य दर्शितम्
 श्याम गोप रादिकाप्त कोक्त गुप्त चेशितम्
 मूर्च्छितान्हि रामराय बोदितात्म किन्करम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

26

ātma-navya-tattva-divya-rāya-bhāgya-darśitam
 śyāma-gopa-rādhikāpta-kokta-gupta-cestitam
 mūrcchitānghri-rāmarāya-bodhitātma-kinkaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Ramananda Raya was graced to receive a divine vision of Sri Gaurasundara. Ramanada saw that Sri Gaurasundara is Krishna himself. Sri Krishna, covered by the radiant glow of the halo of Sri Radha's love. Ramananda Raya saw the divine form of the Deity of his heart: Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Gandharvika Govindasunderjiu. Glimpsing this divine revelation for a brief moment, Ramananda Raya fainted and fell to the ground at the feet of the Lord. Sri Gaurasundara then restored Ramananda Raya to his waking consciousness. I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Sri Saraswat Aroti
 by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

jayare jayare jaya gaura-saraswati
bhakativinoda nraya karuna murati
 Glory, glory to Sri Gaura-Saraswati,
 the personified teachings of Sri Chaitanya;
 in the spiritual succession of Thakur Bhaktivinode - pure mercy incarnate.

prakasile gaura-seva bhuvana mangala
bhakatisiddhanta suddha prajana ujjala
 You revealed Sri Gaura's service - the world's greatest fortune,
 brilliant as the perfect teaching - perfect truth and devotion (Bhakti-siddhanta).

radha-syama ekatanu dakshe gora raya
bame radha madhye svayam syama-gopa jaya
 On the alter, on the right side, Radha-Shyama
 in one united form as Sri Gauranga;
 on the left side stands Sri Radhika,
 in the middle the shining dark cowherd Krishna.

vraja rasa nava bhava navadwipe raje
udare madhura raga obhinovo saje
 The sweetheart's love for Krishna's service as a consort in Vraja
 now revealed by Sri Gauranga in Nabadwip; in an effulgent form so charming,
 the magnanimity of sweetest love in a new manifestation.

madhuryya kaivalya raga vrajera niryyasa
prapti parakashtha tahe gauranga vilasa
 The unity of divine loveliness,
 the essence of the pastimes of Vrindaban,
 one can find its acme there in Sri Gauranga's pastimes.

radha bhava-kanti angikari' bhala mate
dakshine asana rasa garima dekhate
 Taking the heart and halo of Sri Radha most beautifully,
 Gauranga is honoured on the right side to show his rasa's glory.

radha-rasa-troyo-svada rahasya proyasa
nirakhi praphulla radha mukhe manda hasa
 A divine play - the Lord hankers for Sri Radha's threefold relish;
 seeing this her heart blooms,
 the sweet smile of her lotus face becomes embellished.

madhye rahi vamsirave ghoshe vamsidhara
radhara sampade ami gauranga-sundara
 In the centre playing his flute, Vamsidhara the flute-player announces,
 "In the glory of my Radha, I'm Gauranga-Sundar!"

madabhishta rupa radhara hndaya mandire
gauranga bhajile sushthu sphurtti paya tare
 My most cherished form lives in the temple of Her heart.
 I shine forth in that form when you serve Gauranga."

nadiya prakase mahaprabhu gaura-nidhi
patita pavana deve milaila vidhi
 Blessed Gaura Mahaprabhu came down in Nadia,
 Sent me by his mercy to my lord, master, saviour.

e-rupa arati brahma sambhu agocara
gaura bhakta knpa patra matra siddhi sara
 Such an arati lord Brahma, lord Sambhu cannot see,
 Such perfection's only for those blessed by Gaura's devotee.

sri svarupa, ramananda, rupa, sanatana
sri raghu, jivadi kripaya dekhe bhakta-jana
 Sri Svarupa, Ramananda, Rupa, Sanatana,
 Sri Raghu, Jiva and the blessed bhaktas have seen this vision.

jaya guru-gaura-radha-govinda-sundara
jaya dao bhakta vnnda nitya nirantara
 Glory! Guru, Gaura, Radha, beautiful Govinda,
 Sing their glories, O devotees! ever and forever.

२७

नश्वत कुश्लह कूर्म्म विप्र रूप भक्ति तोशहनम्
 राम दास विप्र मोह मुक्त भक्त पोशहनम्
 काल क्रिश्न दास मुक्त भक्तहारि पिन्जरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

27

naṣṭa-kuṣṭha-kūrmma-vipra-rūpa-bhakti-toṣanam
 rāma-dāsa-vipra-moha-mukta-bhakta-poṣanam
 kāla-kṛṣṇa-dāsa-mukta-bhāṭṭathāri-piñjaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

At Kurmakshetra in South India, Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya embraced a devotee afflicted with leprosy, the saintly brahmana Vasudev. By the Lord's Grace, Vasudev's leprosy was cured and his body became beautiful. Later, Sri Gaurasundara liberated the brahmana named Ramadas who was under the misconception that his worshipable Goddess, Sita, the wife of Rama, was touched by a demon. The Lord cited the Kurma Purana to prove that the transcendental form of Sita is beyond all material contamination. He blessed Ramadas with pure devotion. Further along in his journey through South India, Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya saved his servant Kala-Krishnadas from the clutches of the infamous Bhattathari sect.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Greatness of the Vaishnava by Srila Bhakt Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

In the beginner, faith in the Vaisnava is not apparent. The newcomer in devotion says, "I want Bhagavan, God, Krishna. Then why the impression is always given to us, 'O, you must get the kṛpa, the mercy, of a Vaisnava; you must get his blessing. You must go to him to have your fortune'? Why this tedious thing, that the Vaisnava always is coming between us, between Bhagavan and myself?" But when the aspirant is grown up, his faith in the Vaisnava becomes established more and more. Ultimately, even our attention to the vigraha, the Deity, and the

sastra, the Scripture, we may leave, we may put aside, but we must always submit to the Vaisnava, the Lord's living agent.

So the first cause of nama-aparadha is offense to the Vaisnava:

*satam ninda namnah paramam aparadham vitanute
yatah khyatim yatam katham u sahate tad-vigarham*
(Sri Padma Purana)

"To blaspheme the saintly persons who are engaged in preaching the glories of the Hare Krishna maha-mantra is the worst offense at the lotus feet of the Holy Name. The Nama Prabhu, Who is identical with Krishna, will never tolerate such blasphemous activities, even from one who passes as a great devotee."

While taking the Name, especially in the beginning of spiritual practice, the first warning is this: "Be careful in your association with the sadhus. They are truly your well-wishers to the utmost, the agents who are carrying good to you, so be very much alert not to commit any wrong against them. Don't misunderstand them; try to have faith in them. Their goodness is beyond your understanding. They love you so much. You cannot love yourself as much as they do, because they see you as the property of their Lord. From that standpoint they love you; and that love is very high, in quality and quantity. So be very careful, don't commit any wrong against the sadhu you must always remember this."

*yadi vaisnava-aparadha uthe hati mata
upade va cinde, tara sukhi yaya pata*
(Cc. Madhya 19:156)

"If the devotee commits offense to the Vaisnava while cultivating the creeper of devotion, his offense is compared to a mad elephant that uproots the creeper and breaks it. In this way the leaves of the creeper become dried up."

If any great crime comes against the sadhu, the Vaisnava, then the whole of the offender's devotional life will be demolished. The Lord will be enraged with him: "My devotee is going to give him all wealth, and he is kicking him? What is this? He is the most wretched..." So we must be careful about this offense of satam-ninda, the first nama-aparadha: offense to the Holy Name.

But still we see that Nityananda Prabhu is the most merciful, even to the offenders. His nature is of a peculiar type, a special type, such that whom even Mahaprabhu is rejecting, He is keeping them, giving them assurance: "No, no, don't be hopeless..." Nityananda Prabhu's mercy was shown in this way in the pastime of Mahaprabhu and Kala-Krishna dasa.

Kala-Krishna dasa was accompanying Mahaprabhu on His journey in south India, and there he did something wrong: he left Mahaprabhu's personal association, enticed by the Bhattatharis, the gypsy women. This occurred in south Kerala, Karnataka, the place of Madhvacarya. The people of that province, both men and women, are reputed to be very beautiful. Their complexion is very good, as well as their features and their figures; Gandhi referred to that place as the 'land of the fairies'. And Kala-Krishna dasa was enticed, and left Mahaprabhu's association. That even in the direct company of Mahaprabhu, Kala-Krishna dasa was deviated from Him, he could be taken away, is certainly also for our instruction. But utilising His special power, Mahaprabhu rescued Kala-Krishna dasa from the gypsies' camp; and later, after taking him to Jagannath Puri, Mahaprabhu released him from His service, saying "He is of such nature; but, anyhow, I have taken him from the hands of those villifiers. Now I release him, he may go anywhere." But Nityananda Prabhu utilised Kala-Krishna dasa, He again gave him service: "Go to Saci devi and inform her that Mahaprabhu has arrived in Puri safely after two years tour in the south country. Mahaprabhu's safe arrival' give this news to Saci devi." Despite Mahaprabhu's rejection, still Kala-Krishna dasa was utilised, by Nityananda Prabhu.

When I was preaching in Madras there was a similar case which I can remember. Myself and Hayagriva brahmacari (later he became Sripad Madhava Maharaj) were preaching there, and we sent one boy to the Madras Centre of Gaudiya Math. He was staying there and serving, as a brahmacari, but then he became misguided. Sripad B.P. Tirtha Maharaj, who was at that time quite elderly, was in charge of the Math there, and he punished that fallen brahmacari by ousting him, sending him away from the Math. He managed to stay in some other place in the city, then, after Sripad Tirtha Maharaj had left Madras, that boy came to Hayagriva and myself, pleading: "You please give permission, let me stay in the Math." We told him, "Guru Maharaj is very soon coming here; at that time, you come..." Then when Guru Maharaj came, to officially open the new lecture hall,

we put the case to him: "This boy came for service, but then he had to leave, for such a reason; but again now he wants to stay in the Math. We have told him, 'Guru Maharaj is coming, and you come at that time'; now, he has come, what to do with him?"

Then our Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, said: "Mahaprabhu did not take Kala-Krishna dasa after he was seduced by the Bhattatharis' showing him a lady, a girl. So, I can't accept him. But Nityananda Prabhu kept him, and gave him engagement. So you should keep him." A peculiar position we then found ourselves in! I thought: "Gurudev, you are all-in-all our leader, our unconditional Lord; you can't accept him, then how can we give him shelter, being under your guidance?" That was a puzzle: "How can we do it? If you can't accept, then how can we?" But Guru Maharaj has said, "I can't accept him; but you should keep him...." And we had to adjust with that.

From this we can trace the line of benevolence and causeless mercy. The line of causeless mercy is extending from the Centre, but the extension gets the more intense position: "Go to see the mercy department, take yourself there; perhaps, there is some arrangement to help, to accept you..." Just as in a hospital, the general department disappoints the patient: "No, we can't accept such patients as you here. But, you may try the other department. There, you will find more accomodation". And after going there and checking, the patient finds them to be of such type: "Here we can accept all. There is arrangement for you." In this way we find the servants are more benevolent, more even than their Lord. It is inconceivable.

In seeing the mood of humility as expressed in different ways by Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami and Vrndavan das Thakur, I also came to some revolutionary understanding about this.

While writing Sri Chaitanya-charitamrta, Kaviraj Goswami has expressed so much humility, humility of such a degree, that he says "My position is the worst; I am a sinner far worse than Jagai and Madhai, I am lower than the worm in the stool. If anyone hears my name, his merit will be diminished; and if anyone speaks my name, he commits sin - such kind of wretched person I am. But the grace of Nityananda Prabhu has taken me up from such a nasty pit, taken me to Rupa-Sanatana, to Raghunatha das, and to divine Vrindavan. I should not

proclaim this, I should not speak in such a way, that "I have got something" - but if I do not say so, then it will show ingratitude to Nityananda Prabhu, I would be a traitor to Him. So I shall have to say, to admit, "I have got something"; and that is by the grace of Nityananda. It is all His property, His grace, otherwise there is nothing, no worth at all in me." With so much humility Kaviraj Goswami is approaching the public and appealing to them to come to Gaura-Nityananda.

But Vrindavan das Thakur, in his writing, says, "I appeal most fervently and with the greatest humility to you all: accept Nityananda and Sri Gauranga! You'll get the best benefit of your life. This I urgently beg you, with the utmost humility, with a straw between my teeth. But if such appeal of mine fails, and if still you want to put blame on Nityananda-Gauranga, then I just kick you! I kick such a person, demoniac person."

*eta parihare o ye papi ninda kare
tabe lathi maron ta'ra sirera upare*
(C. Bhag. Madhya 11:63)

"If in spite of hearing the glories of Nityananda, one blasphemizes Him, then I kick the head of such a sinful person."

To this, the ordinary commentators will say, "Kaviraj Goswami and others, they are humiliating themselves so much, they are appealing in such a humble way. But this Vrindavan das! What kind of egoistic fellow is he? He says, he kicks those who do not come to hear his Gaura-Nityananda. He'll kick them! Such a boast, so proud he is - is he a Vaisnava? Is this type of person a Vaisnava? *Trnad api sunicena, taror api sahisnuna*: more humble than straw, more tolerant than a tree -- is he of this type?"

This is how Vrindavan Thakur's statement is met by the ordinary thinkers; but not long after joining the Gaudiya Math, I heard a revolutionary remark from our Guru Maharaj, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, in which we find a most peculiar meaning or explanation. He said: "For those who had no chance, no possibility of entering into devotional service, by this statement Vrindavan Thakur has created a path. For those who had no chance of getting any service, Vrindavan Thakur has made that chance by kicking them." How is it so? Guru Maharaj explained, "Vrindavan Thakur has pronounced such a bold expression

against those unbelieving persons to wound their feelings, so that Krishna will come to their aid. Just as, if any attendant or son of a gentleman does wrong to some other person, then that person's guardians will come to help their dependent: "Oh, what he has done to you, don't mind it; look here, I am giving something to you - be pleased, and go on, happily..." So, because Vrindavan Thakur has in such an ostentatious way apparently committed some wrong against that particular unbelieving section, it will draw Krishna's attention; Mahaprabhu's special attention will be drawn towards them, that "My son has done something wrong, some damage to you; don't take it badly, but 'forgive and forget' now, I am giving something to you, come..."

In this way Vrindavan Thakur has made a new path, by threatening the unbelievers in Gaura-Nityananda; by his strong remark of very abusive character, he has given the chance to those fellows to draw the greater and more special attention of the authority.

But this kind of statement, as we see given by Vrindavan Das Thakur, from where can it come? Only from the fully surrendered soul. Who is fully surrendered to Krishna - they can say such things.

Krishna is the Absolute Good; and everything in the soul who is fully surrendered to Krishna, everything in the pure Vaisnava, cannot but be goodness. Just as iron when put into the fire becomes of the nature of fire -- so the fully surrendered soul is imbued with Krishna in its every part.

sarva maha-guna-gana vaisnava-sarire
krsna-bhakte krsnera guna sakali sancare
 (Cc Madhya 22:75)

"A Vaisnava is one who has developed all good transcendental qualities. All the good qualities of Krishna gradually develop in Krishna's devotee."

Every part of a pure Vaisnava, his wrath, his abusing, everything in him is pure, is good. It cannot but be. Whether his blessing or his curse, through him Krishna is giving something. Nalakuvera and Manigriva were cursed by Rsi Narada to become trees; but that misfortune was managed in such a way that they came to have their birth in Vrindavan, so that when their tree-form would be broken,

uprooted by Krishna, they would get the chance to go to Goloka, for their eternal service.

So any connection with a Vaisnava is able to give such an ultimately beneficial result. But that does not mean that we shall deliberately go to offend him! It is not meant like that and we should not take it in that way. To do so will be inconsistent with the meaning; it will be suicidal.

The Lord Himself says, *aham bhakta-parardhino asvatantra iva dvija*, "I am dependent on My devotees." This was told by Lord Narayana to Durvasa Muni, in the case of Ambarisa Maharaj. Through affection, the infinitesimal jiva-soul, though by constitution the Lord's potency, and fully dependent on Him, can conquer or control his Possessor, his Lord.

We find that the law of affection is such. In India, in the family, the mother formally has nothing, she has no property, no right; but she commands reverence and respect, a high respect, and through this, she holds a superior position even to that of the father. The father holds the property; the mother holds no such property, no such right, formal right, but she has 'social right,' and through it she holds the greatest respect of the children.

There is a popular sloka which says that the father is considered 'higher than the heaven', and the mother, 'higher than the land where we stand.' And it is also said, and we see, that both the mother and the father help to raise the children, but in that the mother's quota is far greater than that of the father, so her dignity, her superiority, is much greater than his. This is the custom in *varnasrama-dharma*: the mother has no legal possession, but she has social or moral possession.

When Durvasa Muni ran to Lord Narayana for His shelter, being chased by Sudarsana Cakra due to his offense against Ambarisa Maharaj, Lord Narayana told him,

aham bhakta-parardhino, hy asvatantra iva dvija
sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo, bhaktir bhakta-jana-priyah
 (S.Bhag 9:4:63)

"I am dependent on My devotees. O you brahmin, I am not at all independent of them -- I am dependent on them, as if I have no freedom of My own. Yes, freedom I have got; but through My devotees' affection, I am reduced to such a position that it is as if I have none. In the case of My devotees I cannot but be partial; My independent thinking has no place there, so much indebted I think I am to them. Sadhubhir grasta-hrdayo: My whole heart has been 'swallowed' by them, those saints, devotees. They have swallowed Me, and I may not have any independent thinking, but only their interest, at heart. By their service, by their serving tendency, they have acquired such a position with Me."

Such an admission, a wonderful thing! Durvasa Muni wanted impartial judgement from the Lord: "I am a brahmana, Ambarisa is a ksatriya; I am a sannyasi, he is a grhastha, in household life. So my prestige is above him. And You are 'brahmanya-deva', You are supposed to be the supporter of the brahmanas. So I have a claim to You, that You must make a fair judgement in this case." Lord Brahma, and Mahadeva Siva, they had both frustrated Durvasa: "Go to Narayana, we can't do anything in this matter, we can't interfere." Then Durvasa had to approach Narayana for shelter. And Narayana replied: aham bhakta parardhino, "I am helpless; I am dependent on My devotees!"

But Narayana also made a good argument to Durvasa: "Yes, you are a brahmana; but Ambarisa was also observing the Ekadasi-vrata, which is connected with Me. You observed that same vow, it is true, and you also knew, like him, that the parana, the time for breaking the fast, is a part of that vow. Then what wrong did Ambarisa do? What was his fault? Only in order to observe, to give respect to the vow, he did parana, in your absence. And you also did parana, on time; but, you are his guest, so he only took a drop of water to observe the indispensable part of the vow. He only took a drop of water, he did not feed himself without feeding you - and you were enraged with him? What he did, in his observance of the vow, he only did it for Me. And that disturbed you. And you say that you are more akin to Me than Ambarisa? The difference between you two arose where? In observance of My vow you both acted - and he was at fault? What reason is there? Who is nearer to Me, you or he?

You say that you are a brahmana, a sannyasi, that you are all these great things, and that you have the higher position. But when you went to burn him with that jatam, that fire-demon created from the hair you plucked from your head,

Ambarisa did not step back, he did not run to save his life. But you - brahmana, sannyasi - when Sudarsana came to attack you, you were running through the whole universe to save your life. Then, who is sannyasi, you or he? When faced with the fire, he did not budge an inch to save his life. He stood, with the attitude: "If I have done anything wrong, let my life be finished." But you ran everywhere - to Brahma, to Siva. Finally you came here, in fear for your life. Then whose renunciation is superior, is better?"

In this way Durvasa was given stricture; he was rebuked, chastised, by Lord Narayana.

Then Lord Narayana told Durvasa, "You will have to go back to Ambarisa. I cannot give any judgement against My devotee. He will give judgement in this case. Go to him, and see how generous he is." What was Durvasa to do? He had to come before his opponent, for his judgement of the case. Arriving at the place of Ambarisa, he found him still standing in the same spot, mortified: "The brahmana is troubled on my account, and he is my guest.

Some accident happened in such a way that Sudarsana chased him, and he is running all around, in every direction. But, he is my guest; without feeding him, how can I take food?" In this way Ambarisa was standing there in a mournful condition: "It is a bad luck for me, that when my guest is waiting I could not feed him, as is proper. How can I take food when my honoured guest is disturbed, and running this way and that? How can I?"

Just as he was thinking this, Durvasa appeared, chased by Sudarsana: "Maharaj, save me! There is no other saviour in this world for me, except you. I have come to you. Please, save me!"

Then Ambarisa began to pacify Sudarsana. He prayed: "If for a single day I have done any devoted activity for Narayana, O Sudarsana, you please pacify yourself. Be pacified. This brahmana is my honourable guest, and that you will disturb him in my presence - I cannot tolerate it. Please, stop."

So Sudarsana had to withdraw, and Durvasa was saved. And then Durvasa was fed, as the guest of Ambarisa. And, astonished by the magnanimity of Ambarisa,

Durvasa announced:

*aho ananta-dasanam, mahattvam drstam adya me
krtagaso 'pi yad rajan, mangalani samihase*
(S.Bhag. 9:5:14)

"O King, today I have experienced the greatness of the devotees of God, of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because in spite of my offense against you, you have prayed for my protection."

Durvasa was astounded to find the depth of generosity in the servitors of Ananta, Narayana. That great rishi began to speak aloud, to announce on all sides the magnanimity, the nobility of the servitors of Narayana: "How great they are! I did so much wrong towards him, and he saved my life from the reaction, the danger that came as reaction! I insulted him, and he is honouring me so much."

So for one who has got nothing, who thinks that he is not an independent entity but that he is a slave, fully dependent on the Absolute, for him the Absolute has got, correspondingly, the proper recognition.

Lord Narayana Himself sent Durvasa to Ambarisa, His devotee, to be judged. Brahma failed, Mahadeva failed, and Narayana Himself admitted: "I also failed; I could not do anything independent of you, My devotee. You are the judge." The Lord makes the highest judge His devotee, His servant. We find it is like this.

२८

रन्नात्तु ब्रुतु ब्रुक्ति तुष्टत ब्रुनि ब्रुहन्म
 लक्ष्म्य गम्य क्रिष्ट रास गोपिकैक पोष्टनम्
 लक्ष्म्य ब्रुष्टत क्रिष्ट शीर्ष साद्व साद्वनाकरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

28

ranganātha-bhāṭṭa-bhakti-tuṣṭa-bhaṅgi-bhāṣaṇam
 lakṣmya-gamya-kṛṣṇa-rāsa-gopikaika-poṣaṇam
 lakṣmya-bhīṣṭa-kṛṣṇa-śīrṣa-sādhya-sādhanākaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord visited Sri Ranga-kshetra in South India where the Vaishnavas are firmly devoted to the worship of Sri Lakshmi Narayan. In a playful mood, Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya had some discussions with the great devotee Sri Venkata Bhatta and instructed Venkata Bhatta that the rasa pastimes are unapproachable for Sri Laksmidevi, who could not enter the rasa lila pastimes even after prolonged penances. Even Laksmidevi is attracted by Krishna since Krishna is the ultimate source of all forms of loving devotion. Only the cowherd maidens of Vraja, headed by Srimati Radharani, can truly satisfy the Lord with their amorous devotion, while Laksmidevi always remains attached to the royal style of wedded devotion to Her Lord (*svakiya*).

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Goloka Lila

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

In Goloka Vrindavan, the abode of Sri Krishna, there are so many parties. The Pastimes there appear to be similar to the competition that goes on here in this world, but the difference is all in the degree of sacrifice the devotee has for their Lord. The life of a devotee is a life of endless sacrifice. The Gopis of Vrindavan are perfectly self-forgetful of their own interest and well-being; they are cent percent devoted not only in the present but also in the eternal future. There they live in the land of mercy, beauty, charm and affection; the plane of Absolute

surrender. And that is the highest plane of our life. Nothing less than wholesale surrender is required there.

As Krishna states, "If you give yourself wholesale to Me then I will give Myself wholesale to you." Srila Rupa Goswami has given us an example of the gradation of service: When Krishna is at the summit of Govardhana hill and he sees Balaram and His sakhya friends playing in the pasturing ground below, He also sees Yasoda with all her helpers busily preparing His meal – all the dasya servitors are seen to be engaged in some arrangement under the direction of Yasoda. Chandravali, with her group, is approaching a particular meeting place; while His beloved Srimati Radharani is coming with Her friends to an appointed place to be united with Krishna. All the different groups represented together around Govardhan are assembling there – santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, and madhura – all are in His sight. He is overseeing everything. So very many affectionate servitors are all vying for His attention. But His eyes are always drawn to Srimati Radharani and Her group.

Even Lakshmi devi – the Goddess of Fortune and wife of Lord Vishnu – wanted to participate in the rasa lila of those simple cowherd girls of Vrindavan, the Gopis, but She could not enter. For that market – that place of the rasa-lila pastime is so very exclusive. Although She has all the wealth and grandeur of Lord Sri Vishnu in Vaikuntha still, unsatisfied, she is running to join in that great dance in which Krishna is at the centre.

No capitalist can enter that market and open a shop there for He has the full monopoly. There is only one commodity in the market and that commodity is Krishna consciousness.

The earth itself is feeling the charming union with Krishna by the divine touch of His Feet. The birds, insects, His friends – everything in the environment – is singing in His sweet play. Only unconditional exclusive Divine Love can enter there. So much so, the attraction of Krishna has captured the hearts of everyone there wholesale. God's grace is of such charming, intense nature that there is no way out but to serve the sweetness – not by fear or by hope, nor by the sense of duty, but all are helplessly attracted to sweet Krishna. Living harmony reigns there in its most natural and intense form. The servants of that quarter feel they cannot live without that service. That is their food.

Srimati Radharani prays, "You have captured My heart fully. Every atom of My body wants only You but the circumstances are so cruel that we are parted. So I will jump into that deep well, taking My life. I pray You will come and take My position and I will take Yours. Oh Krishna, Oh Sri Nandanandan. Then You will realise what hopelessness I am going through and will understand My trouble."

In that self-same mood Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "My friends save Me by showing Me Krishna. Otherwise I can't maintain My existence! What I once saw, touching My heart like lightning then withdrawing, show Me once again for I cannot tolerate the separation. How many times can one die in a second to earn that fortune, to get a moment's perception of Krishna? I am ready to die millions of times. My heart bursts without having a second view of that wonderful thing! I had a little experience previously, but beauty and sweetness can be so cruel! If I don't get that vision I shall die."

२९

ब्रह्म संहिताक्वह्म क्रिश्ण कृति शास्त्र दायकम्
 क्रिश्ण कर्न सीदुह नाम क्रिश्ण काव्य गायकम्
 श्री प्रतापरुद्र राज शीर्ष सेव्य मन्दिरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

29

brahma-samhitākhyā-kṛṣṇa-bhakti-śāstra-dāyakam
 kṛṣṇa-karṇa-sīdhu-nāma-kṛṣṇa-kāvya-gāyakam
 śrī-pratāparudra-rāja-śīrṣa-sevya-mandiram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

While in South India the Lord discovered the ancient literature Sri Brahma Samhita, containing the perfect conclusions of pure devotion (*suddha-bhakti*). Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya had a copy of this book made and took it to show to the devotees of Bengal. Sri Krishna Chaitanya would sing the verses of Sri Krishna Karnamritam in which the wonderful pastimes of Sri Krishna in Vraja are glorified by the poet Bilvmangal Thakur. The king of Orissa, Maharaj Prataparudra, worshipped the feet of Sri Krishna Chaitanya and placed the Lord's feet upon his head.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my sweet Lord, my golden Gaurasundara, the one and only divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Key is in Your Own Hand by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

There is consciousness of the higher, the subjective world, and consciousness of the lower, objective world. Connection with the lower objective world binds us with misery, and relationship with the superior consciousness lifts us up, gives us real fortune. One result is from dedication, and another is from enjoyment. In a word: enjoyment is bad, and devotion is good. On the side of devotion is the Lord, and on that of enjoyment, misery. "There are so many things to be enjoyed": this is fascination with hell, with reaction.

*bhaktis tvayi sthiratara bhagavan yadi syad
daivena nah phalati divya-kesora-murtih
muktih svayam mukulitanjali sevate 'sman
dharmartha-kama-gatayah samaya-pratiksah*
(Krishna-Karnamrta 107)

In his Krishna-karnamrta, Bilvamangala Thakura says: *bhaktis tvayi sthiratara bhagavan yadi syat*, My Lord, if my dedication, my veneration to You is permanent, is in a settled stage, *daivena nah phalati divya-kisora-murtih*, and if it reaches to such a height that we can find *divya-kisora-murtih*, a young pair engaged in that highest pastime - if we can reach so far, to find out the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple, if we can reach to this extent-then we will find, *muktih svayam mukulitanjali sevate 'sman*, or, the facility of liberation, emancipation, with folded palms will come to serve us in any way we like. And, *dharmartha-kama-gatayah sramaya-pratiksah*: *dharma*, the results of dutifulness; *artha*, moneymaking; and *kama*, the objects of sense perception-they are all ready and waiting outside, and whenever a call comes they will come in front of us, 'What do you want, my master, my lord?' That will be our position: *dharma*, *artha*, and *kama* will wait outside, and whenever we call them they will present themselves: 'What do you want me to do?' And *mukti*, liberation, will be always moving around us with folded palms doing service of different types, if in our fortune we can rise up to such height as to find that Divine Couple engaged in happy pastimes."

Bilvamangala Thakura showed in his life a peculiar example: how from the house of the prostitute he went straight to Vrndavan and got the grace of the Supreme Entity; how in his life he was so much engrossed in, almost swallowed by, sensualism of the lowest type; and from that position, in a single life he could raise himself to the highest stage of realization of the Beautiful.

Mahaprabhu took two books from South India; one was Brahma-Samhita, and the other was Krishna-karnamrta. Krishna-karnamrta is about the pastimes of Vrndavan, and Brahma-samhita shows the ontological basis of the Absolute, how the Lord of Vrndavan is the highest conception of Reality.

Krishna-lila is not a matter of history. In history events occur, they happen once and can't reoccur at any time. It is an eternal flow in which what is going on in the past never comes again. There is an expression "history repeats itself," but

that is in the similar nature of the event, not the actual fact; history repeats its nature, but what is gone, is gone. Once it has gone, it has gone forever. But in Krishna-lila, in the eternal world, it is not so. It may present the same thing every time, at every second; thus it is called *nitya-lila*, 'eternal pastimes' - crossing the limitation, the jurisdiction of history. In history, what is past is dead. But the pastimes of the Lord are eternal, *nitya*, always present. Every lila is eternally present; He can show Himself in His eternal forms simultaneously. Son in His past, present and future, all events are simultaneously occurring. When He enters the arena of Kamsa, different groups are seeing Him in different ways. What is seen by one section of people is seen differently by another, according to their own nature.

Even the blind can see Him if He wills. If He wills to show Himself to anyone, though blind one can see Him clearly, because these eyes of flesh are not necessary to see Him. By His willpower alone He can reveal Himself to any person. That was the case with Dhrtarastra in the Kuru-sabha. Dhrtarastra said, "For the time being, my Lord, restore my eyesight so that I can see Your wonderful form which the others are seeing and praising. You can do anything, so only for the time being remove my blindness."

"It is not necessary to remove your blindness, Dhrtarastra! I say 'You see Me' and you will see Me." And by His order, Dhrtarastra saw! His order, His wish is everything. His simple will is everything, the cause of all existence.

The Kurus wanted to see Draupadi naked, but Draupadi's appeal reached Him and He sanctioned cloth, and that cloth became infinite, of infinite character. As much cloth as they removed, so much cloth remained. It is the will, the vicara, which is everything. Such great potency of such high quality is in the Prime Cause. We are accustomed to think: "This is good, this is bad," and "this is possible, this is impossible." We are accustomed to such considerations within our ruled of thought. But these ruled do not apply in His case. All of our experience will fail to occupy even every negligible part of His Kingdom.

He is wonderful. In the example of Vamanavatara it is told of His 'wonderful stride, adbutkrama. With one stride He covered the whole earth, and with the next He captured the whole of heaven. He then needed a place to put His third step, but where? He is adbutkrama, He of wonderful stride; all His steps are wonderful. He is wonder, the source of all wonder to our tiny brain. He is here, He is also

everywhere. With His full representation He is everywhere; yet He is nowhere! Everything is in Him, and nothing is in Him! Krishna said, "Try to understand My peculiar position, Arjuna." He is the Mystery of all mysteries. Even our own soul is astonishing to our worldly experience:

*ascaryavat pasyati kascid enam
ascaryavad vadati tathaiva canyah
ascaryavae cainam anyah srnoti
srutvapy enam veda na caiva kascit*
(Bhagavad-gita 2.29)

We do not even know the extraordinary nature of our own self. It is of a very high order, but our attention is focused towards so many mortal things; we have been introduced to, and captured by, the meanest aspect of the world. This is the consequence of the mood of enjoyment. We want to enjoy, we want to exploit. A gook exploiter is a king to us! But exploitation in itself is degrading, very mean and low. It takes us to the lowest position and makes us victims of a great reaction.

Exploitation and enjoyment: we are in the midst of them and do not know anything but enjoyment. We want to understand anything and everything in terms of enjoyment: we are in such a filthy, degraded position. Only, 'enjoyment, enjoyment' - that is exploitation. But to exploit is the meanest type of nature, it is hateful, and we must get out of the clutches of that ghost of exploitation. And there is another ghost:: renunciation, idleness. But the noble thing is dedication, a dedicated life.

There are two ghosts, one of renunciation and the other of exploitation, and we have to get out of that nightmare, that mania, which is based on our tendency of measuring things to be good and bad. In exploitation there is division into regular and irregular, or *dharma* and *adharma*.

And then renunciation. So many great stalwarts of that conception recommend a complete cessation of the dynamic life. A dead stop! But that should not be the prospect of any conscious man. A dead stop to life: is that any goal of life for the saner section?

A life of nobility, a life of dedication-and not only ordinary dedication for the environment, but dedication for the highest good-is the highest form of life. In the lower stage that dedication is calculative; in the higher stage, spontaneous, automatic. And really, there is joy. Joy is there in quality and quantity; in every way, real life is there. Life is there, and here is the worst shadow, the perverted reflection. And we are told, uddhared atmanatmanam, the key is in our own hand, the freedom by which we can associate with anything, good or bad, and reap the result accordingly.

Ultimately, we are told that the key is in our own hand; none else is to be blamed for our present condition. But there is always the possibility of noble help being extended to us, and we must accept that. Our past actions also influences us a great deal - whether they were good, bad, or of the eternal aspiration, sukriti. But ultimately the possibility of free action is not taken away from us at any stage; even if we are reduced to the level of taking birth as a tree, there also, the freedom is within. It is hard to think that a tree has got independence, free will, but it is there, in a suppressed position.

Freedom is within us also. and we may try as far as possible to understand how it is so, but our freedom is also covered by so many conditions that we may think we are not free but are forced by circumstances. But still, we are free for our selection of any path, good or bad. Our existence is very small and so our freedom is also small and meager, but it is there. Though almost negligible, it exists.

३०

श्री रत्नाग्र भक्त गीत दिव्य नर्त्तनाद्भुतम्
 यात्रि पात्र मित्र रुद्रराज हिच् चमत्कृतम्
 गुण्दिचागमादि तत्त्व रूप काव्य सन्धरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

30

śrī-rathāgra-bhakta-gīta-divya-narttanādbhutam
 yātri-pātra-mitra-rudrarāja-hṛc-camatkṛtam
 guṇḍicāgamādi-tattva-rūpa-kāvya-saṅcaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Surrounded by innumerable devotees singing the holy names, Lord Gaurasundara danced in astonishing ways in front of the ratha (chariot) of Lord Jagannatha. He appeared as the divine and wonderful Nataraja, the king of dancers, astounding the pilgrims and relatives of King Prataparudra, filling their hearts with wonder. By his potency, the natural meaning of the pastimes of Lord Jagannatha's chariot ride to Gundica was manifest in the poem by Srila Rupa Goswami (*priyah so'yam.....*).

All glories, all glories to my golden Lord Gaurasundara the beautiful, the divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

Kurukshetra

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura once revealed the importance of Kuruksetra in a unique way. The words of our guru maharaja were mostly very revolutionary. When I was a beginner with only two years or so in the Gaudiya Math, I was in charge of the Kuruksetra temple. Once, I came to the Calcutta headquarters at the hired house in Ulta Danga for the yearly preaching festival. After the festival I was to return to Kuruksetra. Srila Prabhupad was thinking of opening a "Theistic Exhibition" in Kuruksetra, showing with dioramas how Krishna and His friends came there from Dvaraka, and the gopis came there from Vrndavana.

It is mentioned in Srimad-Bhagavatam that during the solar eclipse, they came to bathe in Brahma-kunda, a sacred lake in Kuruksetra. Srila Prabhupad wanted to show that pastime with a diorama, and so the exhibition was arranged. He ordered handbills to be printed, and twenty thousand circulated in the area, inviting people to come for the exhibition.

In this connection, he told us, "You all know that only the bogus, hollow people and men of shallow thinking like Vrndavana."

I was very much perplexed to hear this. I had been told that Vrndavana is the highest place of spiritual perfection. I had heard that one who has not mastered his senses cannot enter Vrndavana. Only the liberated souls can enter Vrndavana and have the opportunity of discussing Krishna-lila. Vrndavana is for the liberated souls. Those who are not liberated from the demands of their senses may live in Nabadwip, but the liberated souls may live in Vrndavana. Now Prabhupad was saying that the shallow thinkers appreciate Vrndavana, but a man of real bhajana, real divine aspiration, will aspire to live in Kuruksetra.

Hearing this, I felt as if I had fallen from the top of a tree. "What is this?" I thought. I am a very acute listener, so I was very keen to catch the meaning of his words. The next thought he gave us was that Bhaktivinoda Thakura, after visiting many different places of pilgrimage, remarked, "I would like to spend the last days of my life in Kuruksetra. I shall construct a cottage near Brahma-kunda and pass the rest of my life there. Kuruksetra is the real place of bhajana."

Why? Service is more valuable according to the intensity of its necessity. Shrewd merchants seek a market in wartime because in that dangerous position, money is spent like water, without any care for its value. They can earn more money if a war comes. In the same way, when Srimati Radharani's necessity reaches its zenith, service to Her becomes extremely valuable. According to its necessity, service is valued. And in Kuruksetra, Srimati Radharani is in the highest necessity because Krishna is so close, but Their Vrndavana lila is impossible. In a football game, if the ball is just inches from the goal, but again comes back, it is considered a great loss. In the same way, after a long separation, Krishna is there in Kuruksetra, so the hankering for union felt by His devotees must come to its greatest point, but because He is in the role of a king, they cannot meet intimately. The circumstances do not allow the Vrndavana lila to take place. So at that time, Srimati Radharani needs the highest service from Her group, the sakhis.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that in that situation, a drop of service will draw the greatest amount of prema, divine love. In the pastimes of Radha-Govinda, there are two aspects: sambhoga, divine union, and vipralambha, divine separation. When Radha and Krishna are very near to each other, but can't meet intimately, service at that time can draw the greatest gain for the servitors. Therefore, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, "I shall construct a hut on the banks of Brahma-kunda in Kuruksetra and contemplate rendering service to the Divine Couple. If I can achieve that standard where the prospect of service is so high, then there is no possibility of returning to this mundane plane at any time." Upon arriving in Kuruksetra, Srimati Radharani said:

*priyah so 'yam Krishnah sahacari kuru-ksetra-militas
tathdham sd rddhd tad idam ubhayoh sangama-sukham
tathdpyantah-khelan-madhura-murali-pancama-juse
mono me kdUndi-pulina-vipmdya sprhayati*

"O my dear friend, now I am at last reunited with My most beloved Krishna in Kuruksetra. I am the same Radharani, and He is the same Krishna. We are enjoying Our meeting, but still I wish to return to the banks of the Kalindi, where I could hear the sweet melody of His flute sounding the fifth note beneath the trees of the Vrndavana forest." (Padydvali)

Wherever Radharani and Krishna are, Vrndavana is necessary. And Vrndavana means the favorable paraphernalia. In this way, Vrndavana is unique.

When Krishna met the inhabitants of Vrndavana in Kuruksetra, He first came to Nanda and Yasoda's camp after their long separation, to show parental respect to them. In the midst of their great disappointment, they felt, "Oh, our boy has come to see us at last." It was as if life had returned to the dead. After some courtesy was shown to them, Krishna made arrangements to meet privately with the gopis, and suddenly He appeared in their camp. Externally, Krishna was the leader of so many kings in India. And the gopis had come from some unknown quarter, where they lived in the jungle in the society of milkmen. Externally, they had no position, and Krishna held the highest position in the political and royal society. He was the central figure, like the eyeball in every eye. And they were in a helpless, poor and neglected condition. The gopis pleaded with Krishna, saying:

*ahus ca te nalina-nabha padaravindam
yogesvarair hrddi vicintyam agadha-bodhaih*

samsara-kupa-patitottaranavalambam

geham jusdm api manasy udiydt sada nah

The group of gopis told Krishna, "O You who have a lotus navel, we know that the great master yogis who have nothing to do with this mundane world try to meditate upon Your holy lotus feet. Their interest is in higher realization in the conscious world. They are said to center their highest attention on Your lotus feet. And those who are busy elevating their life in this world of exploitation are also busy worshipping Your lotus feet to escape the entanglement of action and reaction. The center of interest for the elevationists (karmis) and the Salvationists (jnanis and yogis) is Your lotus feet.

"And what are we? We are simple people from the country with cows as our wealth. We are animal traders who live in the country, trade in the cow business, and sell curd and million the outskirts of society. We are neither scientific exploiters {karmis}, nor are we the kind of exploiters who do research in the world of consciousness. We only know family life. We have no other qualifications. We are busy with our family life in the lower section of society. But in our audacity, we pray that if at any time You would kindly condescend to extend Your lotus feet to our negligible hearts, we would think ourselves blessed. We are busy in our family matters. We do not know scriptural life or the methods of the Salvationists. We know nothing of yoga, jnana, Vedanta or the Vedas. Our ultimate concern is neither with scriptures or moral standards. We hold a negligible position in society and simply pray that in the midst of our family life we may remember Your holy lotus feet. Please grant this to us. We can't expect anything more from You."

That was their petition. Krishna replied to them, saying:

mayi bhaktir hi bhutanam

amrtatvaya kalpate

distya yad asin mat-sneho

bhavatinam mad-apanah

"Yes, I know. People want devotion to Me to achieve eternal life. To cross the limit of mortality and to have eternal life, they come to Me and worship Me. For these reasons they want My service, but fortunately for you, you have some natural affection towards Me. That will ultimately bring you to Me."

That is the formal or superficial meaning of what was spoken by Krishna and the gopis. But the great preceptors of our line have squeezed out another meaning from these prayers. They are conscious of the real, private relationship between the two parties, so they have drawn out another meaning based on the divine sentiment between the lover and beloved.

When the gopis prayed to Sri Krishna at Kuruksetra, their real meaning was this: "Oh, we remember that one day You sent Uddhava to console us. He recited many scriptural references about how the whole world is mortal, how it is nothing, how we shall all have to die - affection has no great value; attachment must be cut out. He said that we must try to liberate ourselves from any attraction for the environment and attain salvation. You wanted to tell all these apparently sweet things to us through Uddhava.

"Now, You Yourself are also showing us the same path. You say that You are great and that everyone should try, for their highest interest, to think of You."

This explanation is found in Chaitanya-charitamrita. The gopis tell Krishna, "Do you think we are yogis who will be satisfied with abstract meditation on You? Can we be satisfied by imagination? We are not a party to that. Neither are we karmis, fruitive workers who are incurring a great debt from nature, who come to Your door to get relief, praying, 'O God, please relieve us from all our previous sins.' We do not belong to either of these two sections. "What are we? We want to live with You as Your family. We are interested neither in abstract thinking, nor in using You to clear off the faults of karma to nullify our sinful activities. We don't want to use You for any other purpose. We want to have a direct family life with You. Don't You know that? And still You send messages through Uddhava, and now this! Aren't You ashamed of Yourself?" This is their inner meaning.

Krishna's answer also has an inner aspect. He replies, "You know, everyone wants Me. Through devotion they want Me to help them attain the highest position in the world of eternal benefit. If they have a connection with Me, they consider themselves fortunate. But on the other hand, I consider Myself fortunate because I have come in touch with the valuable affection that I found in your hearts."

The gopis read the inner meaning in that way. And when Radharani could see into the inner meaning of Krishna's reply. She became satisfied. "Wherever He

may be in the physical sense," She thought, "At heart. He is Mine alone." She composed Her troubles within and returned to Vrndavana thinking, "He cannot but come to join our party again very soon." In Padyavali, Srila Rupa Goswami reveals the inner meaning of this verse. When Krishna came to the camp of the gopis in Kuruksetra, He suddenly found Srimati Radharani and stooped down as if to touch Her feet. Radharani began backing away, saying, "What are you doing! You are trying to touch My feet?" She shuddered, "You have done nothing wrong. You are My master. You are at liberty to do whatever you want. I am Your maid servant and should try with every nerve to satisfy You. You have committed no crime. I am the criminal. How? I still drag on my body and life. This is my crime-I could not die from Your separation! Still, I show My face to the public-I am not worth Your divine affection. The whole burden of breaking the law of love is on My head."

In this way Srimati Radharani spoke. And in a similar verse, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says:

*na prema-gandho 'sti dardpi me harau krandami saubhagya-bharam prakasitum
vamsi-vilasy-anana-lokanam vina vibharmi yat prana-patangakan vrtha*

"I have not even a bit of divine love for Krishna within Me. Not even a scent of love for Krishna is to be traced within Me. You may ask. Then why are You shedding tears profusely, uninterruptedly? Day and night. You are always shedding tears for Krishna. How do you explain this?" Oh, you don't know. I only do this to make a show and deceive the people in general into thinking that I have divine love for Krishna. In this way I want to become famous as a great devotee of Krishna. But I am a hypocrite. Why do I say so? The positive proof is this: I still live. I could not die! If I had any real love for Krishna. I would have died from His separation. That is the positive proof that I have no trace of Krishna-prema within Me."

Krishna-prema is so high and attractive that once coming in contact with it, no one can maintain his life without it. It is so high, so beautiful, so enchanting-it is heart-swallowing! It is impossible even to conceive of it. Divine love of such a high degree is known as prema. That divine love for Krishna is not to be traced in this mundane world. If by chance someone had any experience of that high and vital kind of devotion, then by any separation from that, he would die instantly. It is so beautiful and magnanimous. We are out to search only for that divine love in this world. And Sriman Mahaprabhu came to distribute that to the world for our sake.

३१

प्रेम मुग्ध रुद्र राज शौर्य वीर्य विक्रमम्
 प्रार्थितान्हि वर्जितान्य सर्व्व दहर्म सन्नामम्
 लुन्धित प्रताप शीर्ष पाद दहूलि दहूसरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

31

prema-mugdha-rudra-rāja-śaurya-vīrya-vikramam
 prārthitānghri-varjitānya-sarvva-dharmma-sangamam
 luṇṭhita-pratāpa-śīrṣa-pāda-dhūli-dhūsaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The king of Orissa, Maharaj Prataparudra of Utkala, was overwhelmed and wonderstruck when he witnessed the pastimes and effulgent beauty of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Maharaj Prataparudra discarded all his previous religious views. He gave up thinking of himself as a hero and a king, realizing his real identity as an eternal servitor of the Lord. With a single-minded desire to satisfy the Lord, Prataparudra Maharaj threw himself to the ground at the feet of Sri Chaitanya, hoping that his head might be anointed with the dust of the Lord's feet. I sing with joy the glories of Sri Chaitanyadev, the golden volcano of divine love.

३२

दाक्शिहनात्य सुप्रसिद्ध पन्दितागह पूजितम्
 श्रेष्ठह राज राजपात्र शीर्षह भक्ति ब्रूहिहत्तम्
 देश मात्रि शेषह दर्शनार्थि गौद गोचरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

32

dākṣiṇātya-suprasiddha-panḍitaugha-pūjitam
 śreṣṭha-rāja-rājapātra-śīrṣa-bhakti-bhūṣitam
 deśa-mātr-śeṣa-darśanārthi-gauḍa-gocaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

When Sri Krishna Chaitanya was in South India the famous religious scholars recognized him as the crown jewel of devotion. He is the wish-fulfilling jewel who gives his devotees a true vision of the supernatural reality of loving devotional feelings (*bhakti-rasa*). The princes and government officials of South Indian states honoured and revered him, their inner hearts awakened with devotion by seeing the Lord.

In accordance with the ancient traditions of sannyasa (asceticism), Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu returned to Bengal to visit the Ganges and his homeland. Returning to Bengal for the last time, he came again to visit his mother and friends.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanyadev, the divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

from Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata,
 Antya Lila, Chapter 3
 by Sri Vrindaban Das Thakur

Sri Chaitanya, after a long sojourn in Puri, went back to Bengal. The Lord felt especially merciful towards Gangadevi, so He came to Bengal.

Sri Vidya Vacaspati was Sarvabhauma's brother. He was gentle, charitable and very saintly. One day Lord Chaitanya arrived at his residence with all His servitors without prior notification. Sri Vidya Vacaspati, seeing that his guest was none other than the Lord of Vaikuntha, Lord Gaurasundara, fell like a rod at His lotus feet. Sri Vidya Vacaspati was so confused with extreme joy that he did not know what was the proper thing to do next. The Lord, also happy to see the

saintly brahmana, embraced him and said, "I have a request. My heart is bent on going to Mathura, Vrndavana. I want to spend a few days here to bathe in the Ganga. But please find Me a quiet bathing spot where I will not be disturbed by crowds. Thereafter, I want you to help Me start My journey to Vraja. If you want Me to remain here, then you must make these arrangements."

Sri Vidya Vacaspati attentively heard everything the Lord said. He replied with great humility, "O how fortunate now is my entire family and race simply by receiving the dust from Your lotus feet by Your coming to my house. My house and everything belong to You my Lord. Kindly remain here comfortably. I will see that no one knows You are here."

The Lord was content to hear his humble and sincere words, so He stayed there for a few days. But how can one hide the sun? The Lord's arrival immediately became known to the masses. Word spread like wildfire everywhere that Sri Chaitanya, the shining jewel of the sannyasa order, was residing in Sri Vidya Vacaspati's house. The people suddenly felt great joy; they felt that they were in Vaikuntha even though they were in their earthly bodies. They became jubilant and chanted "Hari!" Hari!" forgetting their sons, wife, wealth, home and everything else.

People became very excited and began to talk animatedly amongst themselves saying, "Let us go and be blessed by the sight of His lotus feet." They made preparations to go to see the Lord and so almost forgot all etiquette in their enthusiasm. A milling crowd moved toward Vidya Vacaspati's house, all loudly chanting "Hari! Hari!" All the regular paths and roads were full. People went off in all directions, stamping on plants and bushes.

People came unchecked. Undeterred by thorny bushes they happily went to see the Lord. Areas which were woody and wild were cleared up by the moving mass of people and made into makeshift pathways. All of them had one word on their tongues - the holy names of Hari.

People were expectant, and some talked amongst themselves. One said, "I will fall at His feet begging Him to give me just this benediction that all my material entanglements be severed." Another said, "If I could just see Him once with these eyes, then I consider I have received everything obtainable, then why should I ask anything more from Him?" Yet another said, "I was hopelessly ignorant about

His real position and potencies, therefore for so long I have only criticized Him in a very offensive manner. Now I will clasp His lotus feet to my heart and beg Him to tell me how I can get rid of all my offences." A fatherly man said, "My son is a compulsive gambler, and so I will beg the Lord to make him stop." Someone else said, "The only boon I want is that I may always remain fixed at His lotus feet with my body, mind and words and never leave that shelter." Someone else said, "What a wonderful opportunity, I only pray that I may never forget my dear Lord Gaurasundara." Talking in this manner, they kept moving in a massive column, all of them feeling indescribable bliss.

The milling masses converged on the ferry port, all wanting to be the first to cross the river. The boatmen were put into extreme anxiety as they saw the uncontrollable crowd flooding into the larger boats. Hundreds tried to pack into one boat. Finally the boats began to cave in and break apart under the enormous weight. The people in the boats then handed over their clothes to the boatmen as some compensation for their loss, and with unconstrained joy continued their endeavors to cross over. They became innovative in the absence of boats to cross the river and used any available means. Some tied upturned earthen water pots around their chests to float across. Others made rafts out of banana tree trunks and drifted across. The swimmers had great fun swimming in the currents. The whole atmosphere reverberated with such tumultuous sounds of the chanting of "Hari! Hari!" which pierced the outer covering of the material cosmos.

Vidya Vacaspati came running in search of large boats and collected many. But the impatient crowd had no time to wait. They just crossed over anyhow. Only the Supreme Personality can attract the minds of people in the way Lord Chaitanya was now doing. The people, having passed over the Ganga, came directly to Vidya Vacaspati and fell at his feet. They said, "You are very saintly and fortunate because the Supreme Lord Chaitanya is a guest in your house. Your good luck cannot be described, so now you kindly save us. We are the most sinful persons, fallen into the dark well of material existence. Kindly lead us and show us His lotus feet so that our wretched and bad lives may become successful."

Sri Vidya Vacaspati was extremely moved to see the sincerity of the people, and he began to weep with joy. Thousands of people were gathered there and Sri Vacaspati led them all to his residence. The only words vibrating in the atmosphere were the chanting of Lord Hari's name. Lord Gaurasundara is an ocean of compassion, and He had incarnated specifically to liberate all living

entities. When He heard the tumultuous chanting of the holy names of God, He came out of the house to bless the huge mass of fortunate souls and increase their joy.

The enchanting figure of Sri Gaurasundar appeared before them. His beauty was unparalleled. His effulgent face was decorated with a gentle smile, and His eyes were bright with transcendental joy. His golden form was ornamented with sandalwood paste tilaka markings, and a flower garland hung loosely on His chest. With a gait as graceful as an elephant He walked forward and raised His long arms, then chanted "Hari! Hari!" with a sound like a thunderbolt.

When the people saw Lord Gaurasundara they jumped and danced in great ecstasy, chanting loudly, and then fell to the ground like sticks offering obeisances. Getting up like the ocean waves, they raised their arms to the sky and prayed, "O Lord, please save us sinners." The Lord smiled benevolently and blessed them saying, "May you develop love for Lord Krishna. Chant Krishna's name, worship Him and hear about His pastimes. Make Lord Krishna the greatest treasure of your lives."

The people were happy beyond words to receive such benedictions. They repeatedly praised the Lord and pleaded, "Your advent in this world is a secret. You appeared in the womb of Mother Sachi in Nabadwip only to liberate the whole universe. But we are so sinful that we could not recognize You and remained in the deep dark well of ignorance spoiling our human lives. You are an ocean of mercy. O Lord, the benefactor of all living entities, benedict us that we may never forget You." All this was happening by the potency of Lord Gaurachandra, that these ordinary people were speaking eloquently.

The whole village began to become excessively crowded. There was no empty space. People climbed to treetops and roofs. Their eagerness to see Him increased with every passing moment. The extraordinary phenomenon was that although the trees and roofs were overcrowded, no houses collapsed or trees fell crashing down. This all happened by the transcendental grace of the Lord. Endlessly their eyes remained fixed on His perfect and beautiful face. Once having seen Him, they had not the desire to return home. They chanted jubilantly and drank with their eyes the captivating beauty of the Lord. With their immovable glances the people's eyes were locked on His form of Bliss in a feeling of stunned rapture.

३३

गौर गर्वि सर्व्व गौद गौरवार्त्त सज्जितम्
 शास्त्र शस्त्र दक्शह दुश्हत नास्तिकादि लज्जितम्
 मुह्यमान मात्रिकादि देह जीव सन्धरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

33

gaura-garvvi-sarvva-gauḍa-gauravārtha-sajjitaṁ
 śāstra-śāstra-dakṣa-duṣṭa-nāstikādi-lajjitaṁ
 muhyamāna-mātrikādi-deha-jīva-saṁdharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The fame of Sri Chaitanyadev had spread far and wide. His name was known and revered throughout all of Bengal. He returned to Nabadwip Dham after an absence of five years and crowds of people came madly running along the roads and pathways hoping to catch a sight of him. Even the proud, atheistic logicians felt embarrassed, remembering the many troubles they had caused Sri Chaitanyadev when he first sent devotees out into the streets singing the holy name of the Lord. The scholarly atheists felt humbled when they saw how the ordinary folk in all walks of life had such resolute faith, such deep inner joy, and such strong feelings of affection for the Lord. Seeing the Lord again after long years of lonely separation, the Lord's mother Sachi Devi and other family members were overwhelmed with feelings of ecstasy. They felt they had gotten back their very life.

I sing with joy the unending glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Mahaprabhu's return to Nabadwip by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

When Mahaprabhu returned to Nabadwip after five years of His sannyasa, all the men, women, and children madly came to see Him, to have a glimpse of His face. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, in his internal conception of the pastimes of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, draws a parallel with the pastimes of Krishna in

Kuruksetra There, Dvaraka-Krishna and the gopis of Vrndavana were meeting, and the gopis and gopas wanted to take Krishna from Dvaraka back to Vrndavana.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura expresses a similar aspiration. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu returned to Navadvipa and the crowds rushed to see Him, He stood on the roof of Vacaspati Pandita's house in the red dress of sannyasi. Taking himself as a permanent resident of Navadvipa, and as one of the members of Srivasa Angam, Bhaktivinoda Thakura envisions himself seeing Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on the rooftop. When Krishna had gone to Dvaraka and wouldn't return to Vrndavana, the hearts of all the devotees were burdened with grief.

In a similar way, Bhaktivinoda Thakura fervently prays: "When will the day come when Nimai Pandita will give up the robes of renunciation and again come and join us in kirtana in the house of Srivasa? Now He can't come as a sannyasi. He can't return to His old house. So now, we are deserted by Him, but our aspiration this: just as the gopis wanted Krishna's royal dress removed, and His cowherd dress resumed, so they could take Him again to Vrndavana and play with Him and rejoice, we aspire that Mahaprabhu's sannyasa dress be removed, and His former dress resumed. In this way, we will get back our Nimai Pandita, who is one of us, in Srivasa Angam, and together we shall rejoice, taking the name of Krishna. Oh, when will that day be mine?"

३४

न्यास पन्च वर्षह पूर्ण जन्म भूमि दर्शनम्
 कोति कोति लोक लुब्ध मुग्ध द्रिष्टि कर्षणम्
 कोति कन्ध क्रिष्ण नाम ग्होश्च ब्रह्मिताम्बरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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nyāsa-pañca-varṣa-pūrṇa-janma-bhūmi-darśanam
 koṭi-koṭi-loka-lubdha-mugdha-dṛṣṭi-karṣaṇam
 koṭi-kaṇṭha-kṛṣṇa-nāma-ghoṣa-bheditāmbaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Millions of people, young and old, came to see him. Deeply moved, their eyes and faces filled with eagerness, they beheld their Lord who attracts the hearts of everyone. As millions upon millions of voices repeatedly sang out "Hari" and "Krishna", the tumultuous chanting of the devotees of Sri Gaurahari shook the heavens.

I sing with joy the unending glories of Lord Gaurasundara the Beautiful, the divine abode of pure love.

Illumination:

**Sriman-Mahaprabhor asta kaliya lila smarana
 mangala stotram**

(auspicious prayers for remembering the eight-fold daily pastimes
 of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu)

by Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura

*sri-gauranga-mahaprabhos-caranayor ya kesa-sesadibhih
 sevagamyataya sva-bhakta-vihita sanyair-yaya labhyate
 tam tan-manasikam smrtim prathayitum bhavyam sada sattamair
 naumi pratyahikam tadiya-caritam sriman-navadvipa-jam*

Devotional service to the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu is far beyond the perception of Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Lord Sesa-naga and the rest; but it is continually indulged in by the Lord's own devotees, and it is always available to

other souls as well. Now I will begin my description of the process of manasi-seva (service to the Lord executed within the mind). This process is fit for continuous remembrance by the most virtuous sages. Therefore I offer my most respectful obeisances to the eternal daily life and pastimes of the Lord born in Nabadwip.

*ratryante sayanotthitah sura-sarit-snato vabhau yah prage
purvahne sva-ganair-lasaty upavane-tair-bhati madhyahnahe
yah puryam-aparahnahe nija-grhe sayam grhe 'thangane
srivasasya nisamukhe nisi vasan gaurah sa no raksatu*

At the end of night (before sunrise), Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu gets up from His bed, stretches His body, talks with His wife and washes His face; (2) in the morning, He is massaged with oil and bathes in the celestial Ganges river, then worships Lord Vishnu; (3) in the forenoon period, He enjoys discussing topics about Lord Krishna with His devotees during visits to their homes; (4) at midday, He enjoys pastimes in the gardens on the bank of the Ganges; (5) in the afternoon, He wanders about the town of Navadvipa, sporting with all the residents; (6) at dusk, he returns home to worship Lord Vishnu and perform other rituals; (7) in the evening, He goes with His associates to the courtyard of Srivasa Pandita to chant the holy names and dance in ecstasy; (8) and at night, He returns home to go to sleep. May this Lord Gaura protect us all.

*ratryante pika-kukkutadi-ninadam strutva sva-talpotthitah
sri-visnu-priyaya samam rasa-katham sambhasya santosya tam
gatva 'nyatra dharasanopari vasan svad-bhih sudhautanano
yo matradi-bhir-iksito 'ti-muditas tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

At the end of the night, upon hearing the pleasant sounds made by many birds such as the cuckoos, roosters, and others, Sri Gaura arises from His bed. With His wife, Sri Vishnu Priya, He discusses many topics concerning the transcendental mellows of Their mutual loving affairs, and thus They become very pleased. Then He gets up and goes to another room, wherein He sits upon a raised sitting place and is assisted by His devotees in washing His lotus face with nicely scented water. Thereafter, He very happily visits His mother, Sri Saci Devi, as well as other friends and relatives in the home. I meditate thus on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaura-sundara.

*pratah svah sariti sva-parsada-vrtah snatva prasun-adi-bhis
tam sampujya grhita-caru-vasanah srak-candan-alankrtah
krtva visnu-samarcan-adi sa-gano bhuktv-annam-acamya ca
dvitram canya-grhe sukam svapiti yas tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

In the morning, after sunrise, the Lord goes with His associates to bathe in the Ganges river. While bathing, they also worship mother Ganges by offering flowers, incense and other presentations. After this, they come onto the bank of the river, where He is dressed with exquisite cloth and decorated with fresh flower garlands, sandalwood paste and other ornaments. Then they all return to His home in order to perform opulent worship of Lord Vishnu as well as other rituals, after which they partake of the foods which were offered to Lord Vishnu. After washing His hands and mouth, Lord Gaura goes into another room to rest very happily for awhile. I meditate thus on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaura-hari.

*purvahne sayanotthitah su-payasa praksalya vaktr-ambujam
bhaktaih sri-hari-nama-kirtana-paraih saraddham svayam kirtayan
bhaktanam bhavane 'pi ca sva-bhavane kridan-nrnam vardhayaty-
anandam pura-vasinam ya urudha tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

Upon the arrival of the forenoon period the Lord gets up from His nap and stretches His body. Then he washes His lotus face with sweetly scented water. Meeting with His devotees who are all very fond of chanting Sri Hari-nama-kirtana, He personally tastes and relishes the chanting of the holy names. Thus He sports, sometimes in the homes of various devotees and sometimes in His own home. In this way He increases the ecstatic pleasure of all the people of Nabadwip to limitless heights. I meditate thus on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaura-chandra.

*madhyahne saha taih sva-parsada-ganaih samkirtayad-bhir-bhrsam
sadvaitendu-gadadharah kila saha-srilavadhuta-prabhuh
arame mrdu-marutaih sisiritair-bhrnga-dvijair-nadite
svam vrnda-vipinam smaran bhrahmati yas tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

During the midday period, Lord Chaitanya continues to enjoy the performance of intensely enthusiastic chanting and dancing, surrounded by His own dear devotees such as the moon-like Advaita Acarya, Gadadhara Pandita, and the divine madman Srila Nityananda Prabhu. Afterwards, they all wander throughout the gardens and groves on the bank of the Ganges, where they enjoy the sweet cooling breezes from the river. Hearing the pleasant sounds of the bumblebees in those gardens, the Lord remembers His own ecstatic pastimes of Radha and

Krishna as they are occurring simultaneously in His own forest of Vmdavana. I meditate thus on the daily pastimes of Sri Gauranga.

*yah sriman-aparahnake saha-ganais tais-tadsaih premavams-
ta-drksu svayam apyalam tri-jagatam sarmani vistarayan
aramattata eti paura-janata-caksus-cakorodupo
matra dvari-mudeksito nija-grham tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

During the splendidly beautiful afternoon period, the Lord and His devotees become equally maddened in ecstatic love, and being ornamented like this, they expand every-increasing ripples of auspicious benefit for all the three worlds. In this mood, they leave the gardens and travel back toward His home. On the way, they satisfy the eyes of all the townspeople, just as the moon satisfies the cakora bird with its moonbeams. Reaching home, the Lord is lavished with loving attentions by His mother. I thus meditate on the daily pastimes of Gaura.

*yas-tri-srotasi sayam-apta-nivahaih snatva pradipali-bhih
puspadyais ca samarcitah kalita-sat-pattambarah srag-dharah
visnos-tat-samay-arcanam ca krtavan dipali-bhis taih samam
bhuktv-annani su-vitikam api tatha tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

At dusk, the Lord bathes with His dear friends in the river Ganges, who flows in three parts. They devoutly worship the Ganges by offering ghee lamps, flowers, and other articles. Afterwards, the Lord puts on fresh silken clothes and is adorned with flower garlands and other decorations. Then, He worships Lord Vishnu by performing the evening arati ceremony, offering ghee lamps and other articles. Afterwards, He and His friends partake of the foodstuffs and betel nuts that were offered to Lord Vishnu. I thus meditate on the daily pastimes of Lord Gaurasundara.

*yah srivasa-grhe pradosa-samaye hy-advaita-candradi-bhih
sarvair-bhakta-ganaih samam hari-katha-piyusam-asvadayam
premananda-samakulas-catula-dhih samkirtane-lampatah
kartum kirtanam-urdhvam-udyama-paras tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

In the evening time, the Lord goes to the home of Srivasa Pandita, accompanied by Srila Advaita-chandra and other dear associates. Meeting with the multitude of devotees, He tastes and relishes the nectar of topics concerning Lord Hari and His mind becomes most agitated with the ecstasies of pure love of Godhead. Then, becoming very eager to relish the congregational chanting of the holy names of

the Lord, He orchestrates the performance of intensely jubilant sankirtana which attains the summit of passionate glorification of the holy names. I thus meditate on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaura-sundara.

*srivas-angana avrto nija-ganaih sarddham prabhu-bhyam natann-
uccais-tala-mrdanga-vadana-parair gayad-bhir-ullasayan
bhramyan srila-gadadharena sahito naktam vibhatty-adbhutam
svagare sayanalaye svapiti yas tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

Continuing well into the night, the Lord dances and dances in the courtyard of Srivasa, surrounded by His most intimate devotees. His most ecstatic singing is accompanied by His devotees who are expert in playing rhythms loudly on the mridanga drums. He wanders and dances with Sri Gadadhara Prabhu in the most astonishing way, throughout the night, until just before dawn. Then He returns to His own home, where He retires to His bedchamber and falls asleep with His beautiful consort. I thus meditate on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaura-nataraja.

*sri-gauranga-vidhoh sva-dhamani navadvipe 'sta-kalodbhavam
bhavyam bhavya-janena gokula-vidhor-lila-smrter-aditah
lilam dyotayad-etad-atra dasakam prityanvito yah pathet
tam prinati sadaiva yah karunaya tam gauram-adhyemy-aham*

Sri Gauranga, the Moon over Navadvipa, is manifest in His own abode during eight periods of each day and every day. His pastimes should be remembered by meditative devotees before they remember the pastimes of Sri Krishna, the Moon over Gokula. If someone lovingly reads or recites the Lord's eternal daily pastimes as they are illuminated in the ten verses of this prayer, then the Lord is immensely pleased with that person, by His own merciful compassion. I thus meditate on the daily pastimes of Sri Gaurachandra.

३५

आर्तं ब्रुत शोकं शान्तिं तापि पापि पावनम्
 लक्ष्म कोटि लोक सन्ना क्रिष्णं द्दहाम द्दहानम्
 राम केलि साग्रजात रूप कर्षणादरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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ārtta-bhakta-śoka-śānti-tāpi-pāpi-pāvanam
 lakṣa-kōṭi-loka-saṅga-kṛṣṇa-dhāma-dhāvanam
 rāma-keli-sāgrajāta-rūpa-karṣaṇādaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord pacified his devotees who were feeling heartbroken since they had been unable to see the Lord of their life for such a long time. He forgave many malicious persons including Gopala Capala and others.

Then he began to run towards Vrindaban, the land of Krishna, carrying thousands upon thousands of people in his wake. Rushing along the road in that way, Sri Chaitanya arrived at Ramkeli where he saw two brothers who appeared before him. The Lord was attracted to these two divine persons, his eternal associates Rupa and Sanatan, who at that time were ministers in the government of the king of Bengal.

I sing with joy the unending glories of the Lord of my life, the beautiful Sri Chaitanyadev.

Illumination:

Sri Dasa-Vidha Namaparadha
 The Ten Offences to the Holy Name
 (to be carefully avoided by the devotee)
 by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

*hari-nama mahamantra sarvva-mantra-sara
 yadera karunabale jagate pracara
 sei nama-parayana sadhu, mahajana
 tahhadera ninda na kariha kadacana*

Hare Krishna Mahamantra - of all mantras the best,
 Throughout the world is preached by saints' potent grace behest;
 Such saints to the Name devoted, such pure souls great:
 Never dare offend them - dare not show them hate.

*vrajendranandana krishna sarvvesvaresvara
 mahesvara adi tara sevana-tatpara
 nama chintamani krishna-chaitanya-svarupa
 bheda-jnana na karibe lila-guna-rupa*

Lord Krishna, son of Nanda, of all lords the Leader -
 The great Siva and all the gods serve His feet forever;
 The touchstone of the Name is Krishna incarnate -
 His Pastimes, Nature, Form also think not separate.

*guru krishna-rupa han sastrera pramane
 guru-rupe krishna kripa kare bhagyavane"
 se gurute marttya-buddhi avajnadi tyaji
 ista-labha kara, nirantara nama bhaji*

"Guru's a form of Krishna- the Scriptures corroborate;
 In the form of Guru, Krishna blesses the fortunate."
 Never offend that Guru by thinking him mere mortal;
 Gain your highest objective - serve the Name for time eternal.

*sruti, sruti-mata saha satvata purana
 sri-nama-charana-padma kare nirajana
 sei sruti-sastra yeba karaye nindana
 se aparadhira sanga karibe varjjana*

The Vedas with Mother Gayatri and Srimad-Bhagavatam
 Illuminate the Lotus Feet of Sri Hari's Name;
 Whoever vilifies those Holy Vedic Scriptures -
 Never keep their company, know them as offenders.

*namera mahima sarvva-sastrete vakhane
 atistuti, hena kabhu na bhaviha mane*

*agastya, ananta, brahma, sivadi satata
ye nama-mahima-gatha sankirttana rata
se nama-mahima-sindhu ke paibe para?
ati-stuti bole yei-sei duracara*

The Glories of the Name - all Scriptures' exaltation;
Dare not think their praise to be exaggeration,
Agastya, Ananta, Brahma, Siva, etc., ever
Sing the Glories of that Name with full-hearted fervour.
Who can cross the ocean of the Glories of that Name?
Whoever says 'exaggeration' have their sin to blame.

*krishna-namavali nitya golokera dhana
kalpita, prakrita, bhava - apardhi-jana*

The Holy Names of Krishna - eternal wealth of Goloka:
Who thinks those Names imaginary, mundane - he's offender.

*name sarvva-papa-ksaya sarvva-sastre kaya
sara-dina papa kari sei bharasaya -
emata durbbuddhi yara sei aparadhi
maya-pravañcita, duhkha bhuñje niravadhi*

All Scriptures claim the Name all sin it can destroy,
But those who spend their time in sin making it a ploy -
Such a wicked attitude is that of an offender
Deceived by illusion, perpetually to suffer.

*atulya sri-krishna-nama purna-rasa-nidhi
tara sama na bhaviha subha-karmma adi*

Incomparable Name of Krishna - the treasure of ecstasy:
Never dare compare it with auspicious piety.

*name sraddha-hina-jana - vidhata-vañchita
tare nama dane aparadha suniscita*

Those who are faithless toward the Name - deceived by Providence:
Giving them the Holy Name surely is an offence.

*suniyao krishna-nama-mahatmya apara
ye priti-rahita, sei naradhama chara
ahamta mamata yara antare bahire
suddha krishna-nama tara kabhu nahi sphure*

Despite them hearing the infinite Glories of Krishna's Name,
Those whose hearts don't melt in love are rascals of ill fame;
Only pride and avarice their thoughts and words do yield
The Pure Name of Krishna to them is never revealed.

*ei dasa-aparddha kariya varjjana
ye sujana kare hari-nama sankirtana
apurvva sri-krishna-prema labhya tara haya
nama-prabhu tara hride nitya vilasaya*

Casting off these ten offences, leaving no exception,
Those pure souls who chant the Name in Holy Congregation
-The miracle of Love for Krishna they will surely savour,
The Name Divine Himself will shine within their hearts forever.

३६

व्याग्ह वारनैन वन्य जन्तु क्रिश्ह गायकम्
 प्रेम त्रित्य ब्हाव मत्त ज्हादक्हन्द नायकम्
 दुर्ग वन्य मार्ग ब्हत मात्र सन्ना सौकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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vyāghra-vāraṇaina-vanya-jantu-kṛṣṇa-gāyakam
 prema-nṛtya-bhāva-matta-jhāḍakhaṇḍa-nāyakam
 durga-vanya-mārga-bhaṭṭa-mātra-sanga-saukaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

As he went on, the Lord came to the Jhadadkanda jungle where the tigers, deer, elephants and other forest creatures were amazed at the sight of him. When the forest animals saw him dancing and singing the holy names in ecstasy those animals also began to sing the names of Krishna in their own voices. The Lord was maddened by ecstasy. Dancing sweetly in the mood of divine love he easily proceeded through inaccessible forest paths with just a single devotee, Balabhadra Bhattacharya, for his companion.

I sing with joy the marvellous pastimes of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Illumination:

from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu,
 His Life and Precepts
 by Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

In his twenty-eighth year he went to Bengal as far as Gauda in Malda. There he picked up two great personages named Rupa and Sanatana. Though descended from the lines of the Karnatic brahmanas, these two brothers turned demi-Moslems by their continual contact with Hussain Shah, the then Emperor of Gauda. Their names had been changed by the Emperor into Dabir Khas and Sakara Mallik, and their master loved them heartily since they were both learned in Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit and were loyal servants of the state. The two gentlemen had found no way to come back as regular Hindus and had written to Mahaprabhu for spiritual help while he was at Puri. Mahaprabhu had written in reply that he would come to them and extricate them from their spiritual difficulties.

Now that he had come to Gauda, both the brothers appeared before him with their long-standing prayer. Mahaprabhu ordered them to go to Vrndavana and meet him there.

Chaitanya returned to Puri through Santipura, where he again met his dear mother. After a short stay at Puri he left for Vrndavana. This time he was accompanied by one Balabhadra Bhattacharya. He visited Vrndavana and came down to Prayag (Allahabad), converting a large number of Mohammedans to Vaisnavism by argument from the Koran. The descendants of those converts are still known as Pathana Vaisnavas.

Rupa Gosvami met him at Allahabad. Chaitanya trained him up in spirituality in ten days and directed him to go to Vrndavana on missions. His first mission was to write theological works explaining scientifically pure bhakti and prema. The second mission was to revive the places where Krishnacandra had in the end of Dvapara-yuga exhibited His spiritual lila (pastimes) for the benefit of the religious world. Rupa Gosvami left Allahabad for Vrndavana, and Mahaprabhu came down to Benares. There he resided in the house of Candrasekhara and accepted his daily bhiksha (meal) in the house of Tapan Misra. Here it was that Sanatana Gosvami joined him and took instruction for two months in spiritual matters.

The biographers, especially Krishnadasa Kaviraja, have given us details of Chaitanya's teachings to Rupa and Sanatana. Krishnadasa was not a contemporary writer, but he gathered his information from the Gosvamis themselves, the direct disciples of Mahaprabhu. Jiva Gosvami, who was nephew of Sanatana and Rupa and who has left us his invaluable work the Sat-sandarbha, has philosophized on the precepts of his great leader. We have gathered and summarised the precepts of Chaitanya from the books of those great writers.

While at Benares, Chaitanya had an interview with the learned sannyasis of that town in the house of a Maratha brahmana who had invited all the sannyasis for entertainment. At this interview, Chaitanya shewed a miracle which attracted all the sannyasis to him. Then ensued reciprocal conversation. The sannyasis were headed by their most learned leader Prakasananda Sarasvati. After a short controversy, they submitted to Mahaprabhu and admitted that they had been misled by the commentaries of Shankaracarya.

It was impossible even for learned scholars to oppose Chaitanya for a long time, for there was some spell in him which touched their hearts and made them weep for their spiritual improvement. The sannyasis of Benares soon fell at the feet of Chaitanya and asked for his grace (krpa). Chaitanya then preached pure bhakti and instilled into their hearts spiritual love for Krishna which obliged them to give up sectarian feelings. The whole population of Benares, on this wonderful conversion of the sannyasis, turned Vaisnavas, and they made a master sankirtana with their new Lord.

After sending Sanatana to Vrndavana, Mahaprabhu went to Puri again through the jungles with his comrade Balabhadra. Balabhadra reported that Mahaprabhu had shown a good many miracles on his way to Puri, such as making tigers and elephants dance on hearing the name of Krishna.

३७

गान्ना यामुनादि बिन्दु मादहवादि माननम्
 मात्तुरार्त्त चित्त यामुनाग्र ब्हाग द्हावनम्
 स्मारित व्रजाति तीव्र विप्रलम्ब कातरम्
 प्रेम द्हाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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gāṅga-yāmunādi-bindu-mādhavādi-mānanam
 mātthurārta-citta-yāmunāgra-bhāga-dhāvanam
 smārīta-vrajāti-tīvra-vipralambha-kātaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

At Varanasi and Prayag on the banks of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers, Sri Gaurasundara visited temples and beheld Deities such as Bindu-Madhava and others. Following the course of the Yamuna river, the Lord began to run along the riverbank, anxious to catch a sight of the sacred place of Mathura. As thoughts of the pastimes of Radha Govinda in Vrindaban arose in his mind, he became fully transported to the sacred abode of Vrindaban where he tasted the painfully sweet feelings of separation felt by Sri Radha.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, whose inner feelings of union in separation rose up from within him and came to the surface, shaking him with ecstatic feelings like an eruption in his limbs. He rose up calling "Krishna", his movements like the massive eruption of a golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

**Sri Chaitanya Charitamrta,
 Madhya Lila, Chapter 2
 by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj ,**

(translation by Srila A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu used to express His mind in this way: "Where is the Lord of My life, who is playing His flute? What shall I do now? Where should I go to find the son of Maharaja Nanda? To whom should I speak? Who can understand My disappointment? Without the son of Nanda Maharaja, My heart is broken."

In this way Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu always expressed bewilderment and lamented in separation from Krishna. At such times, while residing in Puri, He used to read the slokas from Ramananda Raya's drama known as Jagannathavallabhanataka.

[Srimati Radharani used to lament:] "Our Krishna does not realize what we have suffered from injuries inflicted in the course of loving affairs. We are actually misused by love because love does not know where to strike and where not to strike. Even Cupid does not know of our very weakened condition. What should I tell anyone? No one can understand another's difficulties. Our life is actually not under our control, for youth will remain for two or three days and soon be finished. In this condition, O creator, what will be our destination?" Jagannathavallabha-nataka (3.9)

[Srimati Radharani spoke thus, in distress due to separation from Krishna.] "Oh, what shall I say of My distress? After I met Krishna My loving propensities sprouted, but upon separating from Him, I sustained a great shock, which is now continuing like the sufferings of a disease. The only physician for this disease is Krishna Himself, but He is not taking care of this sprouting plant of devotional service. What can I say about the behavior of Krishna? Outwardly He is a very attractive young lover, but at heart He is a great cheat, very expert in killing others' wives."

"My dear friend, I do not understand the regulative principles given by the Creator. I loved Krishna for happiness, but the result was just the opposite. I am now in an ocean of distress. It must be that now I am going to die, for My vital force no longer remains. This is My state of mind.

"By nature loving affairs are very crooked. They are not entered with sufficient knowledge, nor do they consider whether a place is suitable or not, nor do they look forward to the results. By the ropes of His good qualities, Krishna, who is so unkind, has bound My neck and hands, and I am unable to get relief.

"In My loving affairs, there is a person named Madana. His qualities are thus: Personally He possesses no gross body, yet He is very expert in giving pains to others. He has five arrows, and fixing them on His bow, He shoots them into the bodies of innocent women. Thus these women become invalids. It would be

better if He took My life without hesitation, but He does not do so. He simply gives Me pain.

"In the scriptures it is said that one person can never know the unhappiness in the mind of another. Therefore what can I say of My dear friends, Lalita and the others? Nor can they understand the unhappiness within Me. They simply try to console Me repeatedly, saying, 'Dear friend, be patient.'

"I say, 'My dear friends, you are asking Me to be patient, saying that Krishna is an ocean of mercy and that some time in the future He will accept Me. However, I must say that this will not console Me. A living entity's life is very flickering. It is like water on the leaf of a lotus flower. Who will live long enough to expect Krishna's mercy?

"A human being does not live more than a hundred years. You should also consider that the youthfulness of a woman, which is the only attraction for Krishna, remains for only a few days.

"If you say that Krishna is a ocean of transcendental qualities and therefore must be merciful some day, I can only say that He is like fire, which attracts flies by its dazzling brightness and kills them. Such are the qualities of Krishna. By showing us His transcendental qualities, He attracts our minds, and then later, by separating from us, He drowns us in an ocean of unhappiness.' "

In this way, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu lamented in a great ocean of sadness, and thus He opened the doors of His unhappiness. Forced by the waves of ecstasy, His mind wandered over transcendental mellows, and in this way He would read another verse [as follows].

"My dear friends, unless I serve the transcendental form, qualities and pastimes of Sri Krishna, all My days and all My senses will become entirely useless. Now I am uselessly bearing the burden of My senses, which are like stone blocks and dried wood. I do not know how long I will be able to continue without shame.'

"Of what use are eyes if one does not see the face of Krishna, which resembles the moon and is the birthplace of all beauty and the reservoir of the nectarean songs of His flute? Oh, let a thunderbolt strike his head! Why does he keep such eyes?

"My dear friends, please hear Me. I have lost all providential strength. Without Krishna, My body, consciousness and mind, as well as all My senses, are useless.

"Topics about Krishna are like waves of nectar. If such nectar does not enter one's ear, the ear is no better than the hole of a damaged conchshell. Such an ear is created for no purpose.

"The nectar from the lips of Lord Krishna and His transcendental qualities and characteristics surpass the taste of the essence of all nectar, and there is no fault in tasting such nectar. If one does not taste it, he should die immediately after birth, and his tongue is to be considered no better than the tongue of a frog.

"One's nostrils are no better than the bellows of a blacksmith if he has not smelled the fragrance of Krishna's body, which is like the aroma of musk combined with that of the bluish lotus flower. Indeed, such combinations are actually defeated by the aroma of Krishna's body.

"The palms of Krishna's hands and the soles of His feet are so cool and pleasant that they can be compared only to the light of millions of moons. One who has touched such hands and feet has indeed tasted the effects of touchstone. If one has not touched them, his life is spoiled, and his body is like iron."

Lamenting in this way, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu opened the doors of grief within His heart. Morose, humble and disappointed, He read a verse again and again with a despondent heart.

"If, by chance, the transcendental form of Krishna comes before My path of vision, My heart, injured from being beaten, will be stolen away by Cupid, happiness personified. Because I could not see the beautiful form of Krishna to My heart's content, when I again see His form I shall decorate the phases of time with many jewels.

- Jagannatha-vallabha-nataka (3.11)

"Whenever I had the chance to see Lord Krishna's face and His flute, even in a dream, two enemies would appear before Me. They were pleasure and Cupid, and since they took away My mind, I was not able to see the face of Krishna to the full satisfaction of My eyes.

"If by chance such a moment comes when I can once again see Krishna, then I shall worship those seconds, moments and hours with flower garlands and pulp of sandalwood and decorate them with all kinds of jewels and ornaments."

In an instant, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu regained external consciousness and saw two persons before Him. Questioning them, He asked, "Am I conscious? What dreams have I been seeing? What craziness have I spoken? Have you heard some expressions of humility?"

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued: "My dear friends, you are all My life and soul; therefore I tell you that I possess no wealth of love for Krishna. Consequently My life is poverty-stricken. My limbs and senses are useless."

Again He addressed both Svarupa Damodara and Raya Ramananda, speaking despondently: "Alas! My friends, you can now know the certainty within My heart, and after knowing My heart you should judge whether I am correct or not. You can speak of this properly." Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then began to chant another verse.

" 'Love of Godhead, devoid of cheating propensities, is not possible within this material world. If there is such a love, there cannot be separation, for if there is separation, how can one live.' "

"Pure love for Krishna, just like gold from the Jambu River, does not exist in human society. If it existed, there could not be separation. If separation were there, one could not live."

Thus speaking, the son of Srimati Sacimata recited another wonderful verse, and Ramananda Raya and Svarupa Damodara heard this verse with rapt attention. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I feel shameful to disclose the activities of My heart. Nonetheless, I shall be done with all formalities and speak from the heart. Please hear."

*na prema-gandho'sti darapi me harau
krandami saubhagya-bharam prakasitum
vamsi- vilas y-anana-lokanam vina
vibharmi yat prana-patangakan vrtha*

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued: "My dear friends, I have not the slightest tinge of love of Godhead within My heart. When you see Me crying in separation, I am just falsely exhibiting a demonstration of My great fortune. Indeed, not seeing the beautiful face of Krishna playing His flute, I continue to live My life like an insect, without purpose.

"Actually, My love for Krishna is far, far away. Whatever I do is actually false. When you see Me cry, I am simply exhibiting My great fortune. Please try to understand this beyond a doubt.

"Even though I do not see the moonlike face of Krishna playing on His flute and although there is no possibility of My meeting Him, still I take care of My own body. That is the way of lust. In this way, I maintain My fly-like life.

"Love for Lord Krishna is very pure, just like the waters of the Ganges. That love is an ocean of nectar. That pure attachment to Krishna does not conceal any spot, which would appear just like a spot of ink on a white cloth.

"Unalloyed love of Krishna is like the ocean of happiness. If someone gets one drop of it, the whole world can drown in that drop. It is not befitting to express such love of Godhead, yet a madman must speak. However, even though he speaks, no one believes him."

३८

मादहवेन्द्र विप्रलम्ब मातुरेशहत माननम्
 प्रेम दहाम दिशहतकाम पूर्व कुञ्ज काननम्
 गोकुलादि गोशहत गोप गोपिका प्रियन्करम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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mādhavendra-vipralambha-māthureṣṭa-mānanam
 prema-dhāma-dṛṣṭakāma-pūrvva-kuñja-kānanam
 gokulādi-goṣṭha-gopa-gopikā-priyankaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu relished the mood of separation (*vipralambha*) tasted by the great saint Madhavendra Puri, as recorded in his poem describing Sri Radhika's divine mood of lament (*ayi dinadayardra-natha ... kim karomyaham*). Spoken in the mood of Sri Radha (*mahabhava*) the verse expresses her feelings when Sri Krishna left Vrindaban to go to the city of Mathura. Sri Radha said: "Oh Master of Mathura! When shall I see you again? Because of my not seeing you, my agitated heart has become unsteady. Oh most beloved sweetheart of my heart, what shall I do now?" With this meditation, Sri Chaitanya finally arrived in Vrindaban, the divine abode of love. He was absorbed to his heart's content in the sight of the beautiful flower gardens and forests of Vrindaban, which had been his playground in the previous age (*dvapara-yuga*) when he appeared there as the dark blue child Sri Krishna. Sri Chaitanya enjoyed affectionate dealings with the gopas and gopis in the twelve forests of Vrindabana. I sing with joy the unending glories of the Sri Gaurasundara the beautiful, the one and only abode of pure love.

Illumination:

The Fire Bed of Separation
 by Sripad Bhakti Sudhir Goswami Maharaj...
 From the Heart Service Will Appear

Srila Govinda Maharaja in a deep mood of separation. Speaking slowly, movingly, cautiously, initially on the subject of retirement and why there is no retirement from the plane of Krishna consciousness.

After his so-called retirement Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was in the deepest mood of separation for twelve years in the Gambhira, his room in Jagannath Puri, in the company of Swarup Damodar and Ramananda Raya. Srila Sridhar Maharaja writes in his Prema Dhama Deva Stotram:

*sri svarupa raya sanga gambhirantya-lilanam
dvadasavdha banhi garbha vipralambha silanam
radhikadhirudha bhava kanti krsna kuñjaram
prema dhama devam eva naumi gaurasundaram*

Srila Guru Maharaja describes "a fire bed." And what kind of fire it is, we can notice within the poetry of Madhavendra Puri's sick bed *sloka*. Madhavendra Puri was on his disappearance bed. At that time also this service *sloka* come from his lotus mouth. In Chaitanya Charitamrta it is written: "This *sloka* is spoken by Radha Thakurani. By her mercy it appeared in the heart and words of Madhavendra. How Mahaprabhu savored this poetry! There isn't a fourth man who can taste it."

"There isn't a fourth man who can taste it." A very strong comment: Radharani herself entered the fire bed of separation and this *sloka* came out of her. And Madhavendra Puri, at the time of his disappearance, got that mercy. What kind of mercy? You see, the deep separation mood from Krishna is making one mad, but not fully become mad. After that, what position will come when one still has not got Krishna? That is deep separation and hopelessness. Hopeless deep separation (*tanra krpaya sphuriyache madhavendra-vani*).

No hope. When we see that we have no hope for our Krishna consciousness, at that time deep separation will come to the heart and from that happiness will come out. "I am thinking there is no hope — what shall I do now (*dayita bhramyati kim karomy aham*)?" In explaining this verse, Srila Guru Maharaja expressed the deepest feelings we have ever heard, but I do not want to say what they are. It will be too much. Anyhow...

Radharani, Madhavendra, Gaurachandra — but no fourth man. But there was Nityananda Prabhu and other very exclusive devotees. At least four were constantly with Mahaprabhu... what was I talking about originally?

Srila Gurudeva, you were speaking about retirement in relation to Krishna consciousness.

Oh, retirement! Yes. Service is not only or always physical. It is not something that can always be physically observed. Service is not always physically or even mentally performed. But who is fully dedicated, from his heart, service will appear.

And there is no retirement, from the biggest devotee to the smallest — everywhere — the service world is like that *sevamaya bhumika* (the land of dedication). When describing Seva Bhumi (the land of service), or anything spiritual, it is always necessary to use the word *cinmaya* (transcendental) to make it clear that we are speaking of a divine connection with the transcendental plane. All the actions of those living in the transcendental plane are for the service of Krishna: eating, sleeping, working. Anything done will be service, if one is living within the transcendental plane of dedication. Everything will be service there. And Mahaprabhu says that the best service is *sravan*, *kirtan* (talking about Krishna).

*prabhu kahe—age kaha, sunite pai sukhe
apurvamrta-nadi vahe tomara mukhe*

When Raya Ramananda was explaining the pastimes of Radha Krishna, Mahaprabhu said, "Tell me more and more — again and again. I am feeling too much happiness. It is a nectarean ocean!"

In our idea an ocean is something salty. But talk of Krishna and his pastimes is an ocean of nectar. The scriptures also say we are, in fact, all children of the nectar ocean (*srnvantu visve amrtasya putra*). So there should not be any bad taste because our original wealth is nectar, but covered by illusion, everything has become bad. So it is necessary to come out from illusion.

What ocean was churned by the gods and the demons? It was a milk ocean (*keer* — condensed milk). And from that ocean appeared the Moon, Lakshmi Devi, Airavata (Indra's celestial elephant) and the Divine Cow — Surabhi. As the moon rose out of the ocean of nectar, Krishna rose out of the family of Nanda Maharaja (*nanda-kula-candra*).

Rupa Goswami's *sloka* in this regard is very nice: *kva nanda kulacandra*. Chandraka is also related with the peacock:

*alola-candraka-lasad-vanamalya-vamsi-
ratnangadam pranaya-keli-kala-vilasam
syamam tri-bhanga-lalitam niyata-prakasm
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

[Delighting in pastimes of Divine Love, wearing a garland of Vrindavan flowers, a peacock-feather locket dangles as his jeweled hands play the flute. He eternally manifests an exquisite sinuous form of divine dark beauty (Shyamasundar): Govinda, the Original Person, I adore.]

Rupa Goswami's poetry expresses so beautifully the mood of separation from within the heart of Radharani:

*kva nanda-kula-candramah kva sikhi-candrakalankrtih
kva mandra-murali-ravah kva nu surendra-nila-dyutih
kva rasa-rasa-tandavi kva sakhi jiva-raksausadhir
nidhir mama suhrttamah kva tava hanta ha dhig vidhih*

[Where is the moon risen from the family of Nanda? Where is the one who wears the peacock feather? Where is the deep sound of his flute? Where is my shining blue sapphire? Where is the *rasa* of the Rasa Dance? Where, my friend, is the cure for the suffering that has become my life? Where is the best friend of my heart? Tell me where? Without him, I curse the life that I am destined to live!]
— Lalita Madhava, Rupa Goswami

There are many *slokas* we have seen expressing the mood of separation of Radharani or other devotees but none are like...

*ayi dina-dayardra natha he
mathura-natha kadavalokyase
hrdayam tvad-aloka-kataram
dayita bhramyati kim karomy aham*

B. S. Goswami Maharaj: *Srila Gurudeva, this sloka from Chaitanya Charitamrita is very difficult for us to understand because it appears superficially to be so simple.*

In Chaitanya Charitamrita it is revealed by Krishna himself that the chastisement of his beloved steals his mind away from the prayers of the Vedas (*priya yadi mana kari' karaye bhartsana, veda-stuti haite hare sei mora mana*). Actually everything is related with this *sloka* (*ayi dina dayardra natha*). One day it will be revealed, and we will be able to understand the meaning. That is good. But it is true although Kaviraja Goswami himself knows the inner meaning he does not claim, "I know." Who knows will never claim, "I know the meaning of that *sloka*." And that is the difficulty. Actually it is not a question of knowing or unknowing, or what is known or unknown. It is a matter of life and death!

*ka-i-avarahi-am pemmam na hi hoi manuse loe
ja-i hoi kassa virahe hontammi ko jia-i*

Other than the false display of cheaters, real *prema* can't be found in a human being in this world. For one who actually has *prema*, separation results in death (*pralapo vyadhir unmado, moho mrtyur dasa dasa*).

*akaitava krsna-prema, yena jambunada-hema, sei prema nrloke na haya yadi
haya tara yoga, na haya tabe viyoga, viyoga haile keha na jiyaya*

Like the gold of heaven, Krishna *prema* does not exist on earth. In human society it is only shown by pretenders. Who really has love for Krishna, cannot live without it for a moment. Separation is not an option, it is an impossibility.

But Mahaprabhu was submerged in the depths of Radha Bhava in his boiler room (Gambhira) twenty-four hours a day the last twelve years of his life (*dvadasavdha banhi garbha vipralambha silanam*). Those who have Krishna *prema* cannot live without it, but Mahaprabhu was living in a fire bed of Krishna *prema* for twelve years! This is inconceivable. This condition gradually manifested and intensified as Mahaprabhu's Lila progressed. Advaita Acharya had originally requested Krishna, as Mahaprabhu, to descend into this world to save the fallen souls. Mahaprabhu received news from Advaita Acharya through a mystic poem that this desire was fulfilled and now Mahaprabhu may, as he likes, fulfill his own inner purpose (*sri-radhayah pranaya-mahima kidrso vanayaiva*).

Advaita Acharya's Poetry of Madness:

baulake kahiha, —loka ha-ila baula
baulake kahiha, —hate na vikaya caula
baulake kahiha, —kaye nahika aula
baulake kahiha, —iha kahiya che baula
 Tell whom is mad — everyone is mad,
 Tell whom is mad — rice retail is bad,
 Tell whom is mad — mad market is bad,
 Tell whom is mad — who speaks is mad!

When offered one or two sweets (*sandesh*) much joy will come to the heart. We will take that *sandesh* happily. But when surrounded by thousands and thousands of pieces of *sandesh* we will lose all interest in eating. The meaning of the third line *baulake kahiha, —kaye nahika aula*: what he wants to give, the divine madness of Krishna *prema*, is already given abundantly — not necessary to give more. We have been engulfed in an ocean of nectarean sweetness. If surrounded by thousands of pieces of nectarean *sandesh*, then no one will buy, nor will anyone eat. Mahaprabhu inundated the world with Krishna *prema* through his *nama sankirtan* and then entered into the fire bed of separation.

Before his final pastimes (Antya Lila) Mahaprabhu was also within the fire bed of separation but sometimes coming out — coming and going, coming and going. But when he got news from Advaita Acharya, "More is not necessary," then he fulfilled his own desire and began exclusively tasting the deep separation mood of Radharani twenty-four hours a day for the last twelve years of his life (*radha-bhava, dvadasa vatsara aiche dasa — ratri-dine, krsna-rasa asvadaye dui-bandhu-sane*).

Advaita Acharya did not tell Mahaprabhu directly to withdraw his *nama sankirtan* pastimes but spoke cryptically. When asked, Mahaprabhu said Swarup Damodar knows the meaning of "Advaita's mad poem." But Swarup Damodar was in a hazy position and deferred to Mahaprabhu, "What is the meaning of this?" He knows everything, but to be doubly sure he asked Mahaprabhu's opinion. Mahaprabhu answered enigmatically, suggesting that Advaita Acharya is a tantric and he alone knows why he contracts a Deity and then dismisses him. Mahaprabhu said, "Maybe this is the meaning, I do not know." But Mahaprabhu

knows, Swarup Damodar knows, and from that day, Mahaprabhu's emotional state changed dramatically; His feelings of separation from Krishna began doubling exponentially in intensity and magnitude.

Guru Maharaja composed the *slokas* of Prema Dhama Deva Stotram not in one or two days, but in deep meditation, gradually, year after year. First Guru Maharaja composed twelve *slokas*. He then extended that — extended, extended, extended... In this way, he gradually included the entire pastimes of Mahaprabhu (Gaura Lila). When Srila Bhakti Prajñan Keshava Maharaja heard this composition he said, "Impossible! No one can compete with Sridhar Maharaja." He marvelled how Srila Guru Maharaja "included within his poetry Mahaprabhu's philosophy of *acintya-bhedabheda siddhanta*."

We first published twelve *slokas* in Gaudiya Darshan. So first it was twelve *slokas* and then it become more, then more, then more, finally it became seventy. Srila Guru Maharaja put the whole Gaura Lila inside. That idea came to Srila Guru Maharaja. Within the Prema Dhama Deva Stotram he fully represented the pastimes and personality of Mahaprabhu including the "fire bed" of separation that characterized the last twelve years of his divine pastimes. If one has not read Chaitanya Charitamrta, Chaitanya Bhagwat, Chaitanya Mangal, Swarup Damodar's Kadacha [notes], Murari Gupta's Kadacha, there is no problem, one can simply read Prema Dhama Deva Stotram and get everything.

After thus fully glorifying Srila Guru Maharaja, Srila Govinda Maharaja re-entered his deep mood of separation and began singing:

jaya jaya sundara nanda kumara...

abhinava kutmala guccha samujjvala
kuñcita kuntala bhara,
pranayi anerita vandana sahakṛta
curnita vara ghanasara...

— From the Gitavali in the Stavamala of Rupa Goswami.

३९

प्रेम गुन्जनालि पुन्ज पुश्हप पुन्ज रन्जितम्
 गीत त्रित्य दक्शह पक्शह त्रिक्शह लक्शह वन्दितम्
 गो त्रिश्हादि नाद दीप्त पूर्व मोद मेदुरम्
 प्रेम द्हाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

39

prema-guñjanāli-puñja-puṣpa-puñja-rañjitam
 gīta-ṇṛtya-dakṣa-pakṣi-vṛkṣa-lakṣa-vanditam
 go-vṛśādi-nāda-dīpta-pūrvva-moda-meduram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Walking through the groves of Vrindaban, the Lord was welcomed by swarms of humming bumblebees hovering over the blooming flowers of the forest, all busily discussing together the pure love of Radha and Govinda. Different kinds of birds sang and danced in sheer delight when the Lord came walking amongst the trees that were bowing down before him out of respect. In the forest of Vrindaban the memory was aroused in him of his pastimes there in the previous age. He remembered how the cows and calves would all lovingly call out to him, their Lord and protector, the keeper of cattle, Sri Govinda. In this way the Lord would relive his previous pastimes in ecstasy.

I sing with joy the unending glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Divine Abode of Pure Love.

Illumination:

Sri Garga Samhita, Chapter Ten

Sri Narada said: By the wish of the cowherd men, Krishna and Balarama were placed in charge of protecting the cows. Herding the cows with Their cowherd boy friends, Krishna and Balarama would walk in the forest.

Walking before, behind, and on both sides, the cows gazed at Krishna and Balarama's handsome faces. The cows wore glittering golden necklaces, a network of small bells, and tinkling anklets. Their tails were decorated with peacock feathers and bunches of pearls. They were splendid with necklaces of nine jewels. A crown jewel placed between their horns made them beautiful.

Their horns were plated with gold. Some had yellow tails and red hooves. They were decorated with red tilaka. They were like many Mount Kailasas. They had virtues, good character, and beauty.

Accompanied by their calves, the cows walked slowly, their udders full. They were very beautiful. Some were yellow, some multicolored, some black, some green, some smoke-colored, and some cloud-colored. All their eyes were placed on Krishna, His form as dark as a cloud. Some had short horns, some long horns, some high horns, some bent horns, and some horns like a deer's antlers. Some were with many bulls. Some were brown and beautiful. Searching for tender and delicious grasses, millions and millions of cows walked at Krishna's side through forest after forest.

The Yamuna shore is pure and sacred. The groves of Vraja dham are decorated with many dark tamala trees and many beautiful nipa, nimba, kadamba, pravala, panasa, kadali, kovidara, mango, jambu, bilva, asvattha, and kapittha trees. There are many madhavi vines, beautiful in the springtime. Its glory eclipsing the nandana, sarvatobhadra, and caitraratha forests of heaven, this transcendental forest of Vrndavana was splendidly manifest.

In Vrndavana forest, on the beautiful hill named Govardhana, which was made of precious gems, there are many glorious caves and swiftly-moving streams. Govardhana is filled with many beautiful mandara, srikhanda, badari, rambha, devadaru, palasa, plaksa, asoka, arjuna, kadambaka, parijata, campaka and syama-indrayava trees. There are many peacocks, kokilas, and pums-kokilas, and Krishna wandered from forest to forest as He herded the cows.

In Vrndavana, Madhuvana, Talavana, Kumudvana, Bahulavana, Divya-kamavana, on the summit and slopes of Nandisvara Hill, in beautiful Kokilavana which was filled with the singing of cuckoos, in beautiful Kusavana, which was filled with many flowering vines, in beautiful and sacred Bhadravana, in Bhandiropavana, in Lohargala, in shore after shore by the Yamuna, and in forest after forest, handsome Krishna, in yellow garments, dressed as a dancer, holding a stick, decorated with peacock feathers, a crown, and many garlands, playing His flute, and delighting the gopis, was splendidly manifest.

Placing the cows in front and playing many melodies on His flute, Krishna returned to Nanda's village in the evening.

The gopis, hearing the sound of the flute, and seeing the cow's dust fill the sky along the Vamsivata path, went to see Krishna to put their anxieties far away and to taste the highest happiness, for they were unable to forget Him even for a moment.

May Lord Krishna, who did not leave the path, who slowly brought the cows with Him, whose glance was like a lion's, whose playfulness was like a baby elephant's, whose eyes were lotus petals, who was the object of the gopi's glances, who was decorated with cow's dust, who had handsome black hair, who wore golden armlets, who was glorious with a crown, who shot arrows of crooked glances from large eyes that seemed to touch His ears, whose jasmine-garland was decorated with cow's dust, who wore the whorl of a blossoming lotus on His ear, who wore yellow garments, who played the flute, and who removed the earth's great burden, protect you all.

४०

प्रेम बुद्द्ह रुद्द्ह बुद्दिद्ह मत्त त्रित्य कीर्त्तनम्
 प्लाविताश्रु कान्चनाना वास चातुरन्गानम्
 क्रिश्ण क्रिश्ण राव ब्हाव हास्य लास्य ब्हास्वरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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prema-buddha-ruddha-buddhi-matta-ṇṛtya-kīrttanam
 plāvitāśru-kāñcanāṅga-vāsa-cāturanganam
 kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇa-rāva-bhāva-hāsyā-lāsyā-bhāsvaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Overwhelmed by the wave of love Lord Gaurasundara danced and chanted the holy names of Krishna. A stream of tears fell from his eyes, with teardrops falling onto his golden chest and his garments the colour of sunlight. The earth itself was drenched in his tears when he wandered here and there, deeply absorbed in remembrance of the divine love Sri Radha feels for Sri Krishna. In the mood of maha-bhava he would break out in loud laughter and cry out at the top of his voice, "Krishna, Krishna!" without restraint. In this way, by the many different aspects of his pastimes, the brilliance of his beauty and rapture was displayed to the highest degree for the fortunate devotees who were present there. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Brahma's Illusion

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

"Krishna is infinite; He is the wonderful wonder of wonders. As much as we search Him out, we will find no end to His wonders. Even Lord Brahma, the creator of this universe and the original guru of our sampradaya, was astonished by the wonders of Krishna." - Lord Brahma

"I offer my prayers unto You, O praiseworthy Lord who are the child of the cowherd Nanda. Your complexion is the dark-blue color of a thundercloud and You are clad in silk garments that shine like lightning. Your charming face is adorned with gunja-mala ornaments, and Your hair is decorated with a peacock

feather. You look beautiful wearing a garland of forest flowers, and that beauty is enhanced by the morsel of food in Your left hand. You carry a buffalo horn and a stick for herding cows tucked beneath Your left arm. You hold a flute and other emblems, and Your feet are as soft as a lotus."

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, the ultimate cause of all harmony, is so wonderful that simply by approaching Him, we will be charmed by His ways. He is known as Urukrama, for His strides are wonderful, unthinkable, unknown, and unknowable. There is no end to His wonders. Ascaryavat pasyati kascid enam ascaryavad vadati tathaiva canyah: At every step towards Him, one feels wonder. We find no end to that feeling. Krsna is infinite; He is the wonderful wonder of wonders. As much as we search Him out, we will find no end to His wonders.

Even Lord Brahma, the creator of this universe and the original guru of our sampradaya, was astonished by the wonders of Krsna. Once when Krsna was living in Dvaraka, He heard that Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, had come to see Him. Krsna asked His messenger, "Which Brahma?" When the messenger put this question to Brahma, Brahma thought, "Are there other Brahmas also? How is it possible?" He told the messenger, "You just inform Krsna that I am the father of the four Kumaras: the four-headed Brahma." The messenger went to Krsna with the news.

"Yes, show him in," Krsna said, knowing Brahma's temperament. Brahma went in, but he was astounded to see that so many Brahmas had gathered there from all of the universes in the creation. There were hundred-headed, thousand-headed, million-headed Brahmas - all present there. Because the whole creation is based on Krsna's hypnotism, the four-headed Brahma could see Krsna and all those other Brahmas, but the other Brahmas could not see each other. Each one of them saw only Krsna. Each one of them thought, "Krsna has come in my universe and called for me out of some necessity." But the Brahma of this universe could see everything because he had inquired, 'Which Brahma?' What is the meaning of 'Which Brahma?' Are there any other Brahmas? I wonder...." In this way, Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, was baffled by the wonderful ways of Krsna. Previously, in Vrndavana, Brahma had also had some doubt about the position of the Lord. He thought, "Who is this cowherd boy? His ways are very questionable. He moves in such a way that it appears that He does not care for anyone. He is within my brahmanda, my universe, but He does not care to know me. What is

this attitude? Who is He? He is not Narayana. Only Narayana is above me. And I am a little accustomed to His ways and manners. But this boy is not Narayana. That anything can exist above Narayana is impossible. Then who is He?"

To test Krsna, Brahma took away the cowherd boys and calves accompanying Him and hid them in a cave. After a year he returned to see how life was continuing in Vrndavana, to see how Krsna was doing without His calves and cowherd boys. And he found that everything was as before. The Lord, surrounded by His cowherd boyfriends, was carrying His flute under His armpit and a morsel of food in His hand. He found everything going on as it had been. Then Brahma began to think, "What is this? Have the calves and cowherd boys come back without my notice?" He again checked the cave where he had hid them and found that they were all there. Then he thought, "How is this possible? I stole the calves and cowherd boys and hid them here and now that I have returned, I find they are all still here just as before."

Finally, perplexed, he fell at Krsna's lotus feet, praying, "My Lord, I could not recognize You. You have come to play such a plain and ordinary part, that of a cowherd boy. How can anyone believe that You hold an even greater position than that of Narayana? Please forgive whatever I have done."

In many places in Srimad-Bhagavatam, we find Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, being tested by Krsna. And still, Brahma is our gurudeva. He is the original guru of our line. That he could become bewildered is so perplexing and difficult to understand that Madhvacarya eliminated that section from the Srimad-Bhagavatam. He could not accept those two chapters of Srimad-Bhagavatam where Brahma was under illusion, where he had some misunderstanding about Krsna. But Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu accepted everything in toto.

This is a very peculiar thing. How can the original guru of our sampradaya become bewildered about Krsna? It is acintya, inconceivable. Still, everything is intelligible through the philosophy of acintya-bhedabheda-tattva, "inconceivable oneness and difference." How can we accommodate that our original guru becomes perplexed, not only once, but twice? That is lila, a divine pastime. An example of acintya-bhedabheda-tattva is found in the way Krsna deals with His devotees. Krsna Himself is independent of everything. Still, sometimes He shows Himself to be completely subordinate to His servants and must do whatever they want Him to. Then again, sometimes He completely ignores them. These are the

spontaneous pastimes of the Sweet Absolute. Sometimes He shows absolute submission to Srimati Radharani, and again, sometimes He ignores Her. This is the very nature of Krsna's lila.

Rupa Goswami has supplied a verse from his Ujjvala-nilamani as the basis of the proper understanding of krsna-lila. When we think about the pastimes of the absolute, we, the finite, will have to wear this armor: *aher iva gatih premnah svabhava-kutilla bhavet*. We must understand that Krsna's pastimes are naturally crooked, just like the movement of a snake. A snake cannot move in a straight line; he moves in a zig-zag way. The waves that flow from the absolute move in the same way. That characteristic of krsna-lila is always maintained above everything else. Krsna can never be ruled by any law. With this initial consideration we should approach any study of the absolute. We must always keep in mind that He is absolute, and we are infinitesimal. He is *adhoksaja*, transcendental, beyond the world of our experience.

Once I asked our Prabhupada, "Why is there a difference between Sanatana and Rupa in their conception of the final part of krsna-lila? Sanatana closed his summary of Krsna's pastimes in his Krsna-lilastava in Mathura, and Rupa took it another step towards Dvaraka in his Lalita-madhava. He wrote two plays dealing with krsna-lila: one about Dvaraka and one about Vrndavana. Vidagdha-madhava takes place in Vrndavana; Lalita-madhava takes place in Dvaraka. But Sanatana Goswami liked to complete Krsna's pastimes in Mathura. According to Sanatana Goswami, after a long separation between Krsna and His family and friends, like a wheel the pastime moves from Mathura again to Vrndavana. After Krsna has gone to Mathura, the residents of Vrndavana, overwhelmed by separation, begin to think, "Krsna has been gone for such a long time. Nanda and Yasoda have lost their child!" The separation intensifies and develops further until they begin to think, "Oh, Nanda and Yasoda have no child!" Then they think, "They must have a child," and begin to pray for the appearance of Krsna. Then Krsna appears as the son of Nanda and Yasoda. The cycle is complete and everyone is happy thinking, "Oh yes, Yasoda has got a child." In this way Krsna's pastimes again begin developing in Vrndavana and move to Mathura, where He kills Kamsa.

In his Krsna-lila-stava, his summary of krsna-lila, Sanatana Goswami did not take Krsna into Dvaraka from Mathura Mandala. But Rupa Goswami, in his play Lalita-madhava, showed the parallels between krsna-lila in Vrndavana and krsna-lila in Dvaraka. And so, in his Lalita-madhava, Rupa Goswami draws a parallel

between Lalita as Jambavati, Radharani as Satyabhama, and Candravali as Rukmini. In this way, he shows the transformation between Vrndavana and Dvaraka.

I asked Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada about this difference between Rupa and Sanatana. He simply said, "It is adhoksaja, beyond our understanding. So krsna-lila is "ununderstandable" (acintya). Everything is not bound to come within our fist. The Supreme Lord has "All Rights Reserved." This must be understood if we at all want to be in connection with that plane of reality.

So Srimad-Bhagavatam says: jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva: It is a defect to want to understand everything about divinity. Knowledge may be a qualification here in this world, but in relation to the transcendental truth of the highest order, the tendency to want to know everything is a disqualification.

We want to know the value of everything. We want to have the key to everything in our possession. But this is really a bar to progress. If we assert ourselves in this way, we rather lose what confidence we might have in divinity, and there will be some delay in extending the key to us. If a servant, upon getting employment in the master's house, is very eager to be entrusted with the house keys, then the master will suspect him. So to want to know everything is a type of disease, it is an enemy to our progress.

This is, of course, difficult to accept. But still, it is true. Surrender is everything. What cultivation of knowledge do we find in the gopis - the most exalted devotees of Krsna? What was their acquaintance with scripture? Nothing.

What we understand to be "standard purity," what we think to be knowledge - all these things are disqualifications in giving pleasure to the absolute. An example of how our misconceived standards of "purity" and "chastity" are a disqualification can be seen in the following story.

In order to prove the supreme position of Srimati Radharani, one day, Krsna appeared to suddenly fall ill. As He lay sick, He came in another form, disguised as a physician, and said:

"O Yasoda, I have heard that your boy has caught some disease. Is it true?

"Yes, yes, who are you?"

"I am a physician - a mystic physician. I would like to see your son. What is His disease?"

"He fainted; perhaps He has a headache."

Then Krsna in the dress of the physician told Mother Yasoda, "This is a very serious disease. I want to cure Him. But I can only do so if I can have some water brought in a porous pot. Some water should be brought from the Yamuna in a pot that has many holes in it. Only a chaste lady can do this. A chaste girl must bring some water in a porous pot. With the help of that I shall give some medicine to this boy, and He will come to consciousness immediately."

Then Yasoda madly began to search Vrndavana for a chaste lady. Jatila and Kutila were Radharani's mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Because they naturally preached that there was doubt or suspicion about the chastity of the other girls among the gopis, they themselves were generally considered to be chaste. So Yasoda appealed to one of them, Jatila, first. "Take this porous pot and fetch some water from the Yamuna."

"How is it possible? To fetch water in a porous pot is impossible."

"No. The physician says that if one is really a chaste lady, then she can fetch water in a porous pot."

Jatila could not avoid the mad request of Yasoda. Her request was so intense that she had to go. But she could not fetch water from the Yamuna because there were so many holes in the pot. Then Kutila was requested to fetch water in the pot, but she dared not venture to try it, seeing the attempt of her mother. Still, Yasoda was so earnest in her request that Kutila also could not avoid the task. Yasoda couldn't tolerate for a second that her son was in such a condition. And so her request was so intense that Kutila had to go. But she could not fetch water either, because there were so many holes in the waterpot that the water just poured through.

They were astonished, thinking, "What can we do? Among all the girls in Vraja, not a single chaste girl is to be found? What a horrible thing!" So Krsna, in the garb of a physician, singled out Radharani, saying: "I think that She is a chaste lady. Request Her to fetch the water."

And at the request of Yasoda, Radharani could not avoid the task. She had to go fetch water, but She was thinking of Krsna: "If You come to My relief, then only it may be possible; otherwise it is impossible," She prayed. Radharani dipped the porous pot in the water as Krsna touched the pot from within the water. And Radharani with great suspicion took the pot from the water and in great wonder She said, "The water is there!" She had taken some of Her maids, the sakhis, Her chief friends, with Her, and they were all astounded to find that She drew the water from the Yamuna. The holes were there but still the water remained within the pot. So She brought the water to Yasoda and everyone was astounded. And that water with some fictitious medicine was given to the boy Krsna, and Krsna arose from His "unconscious" state.

This was a tactic by Krsna to show the position of Radharani, to show what chastity is. What is chastity? Ordinary "chastity" is not real chastity. Real purity, real chastity, is far above all relative considerations of chastity. And that is inconceivable, beyond our knowledge and reason, just as how a porous pot can contain water. It is a miracle.

But God works wonders. His ways are filled with miracles. We, should be prepared for that. We should be prepared that all the knowledge of this world, all our experience, will prove to be wrong. So it is said, *jñane prayasam udapasya namanta eva*: Be clear of your past experiences, what you have drawn from the world of the senses, empiric knowledge (*pratyaksa-jñana*). Your tendency will always be to try to push your way into the transcendental world on the strength of mundane knowledge. But this verse is saying, "You fallen people, your capital is the experience of this world, of the senses. But it won't do, it won't have any value in that higher plane. What is found there is a new thing, so approach that world with an open mind; understand that everything is possible with the infinite. All your expectations, your past experience, has no value. Why don't you give up trying to dodge this point?"

The transcendental world is something quite new to us. It is very difficult to get out of this superstition of so-called "truth" here. But still it is necessary that we accept that anything and everything is possible with God. He is the master of impossibilities. Possibility and impossibility are found only in our dictionary, yet even Napoleon wanted to remove the word "impossible." He said, "'Impossible' is a word in a fool's dictionary."

How are we to understand that the original guru of our sampradaya becomes bewildered? It is "impossible." We must suspend our "knowledge" (jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva). We may take it that Krsna is playing hide and seek, perhaps, with Brahma, our gurudeva. It is like a game of hide and seek. Sometimes Krsna is defeating others and sometimes He is defeated.

When Krsna and Balarama are playing with Their friends in the jungle, They generally play in two groups. Krsna is in one group and Balarama is in another. Krsna is considered to be less strong than Balarama. Balarama is the strongest person there, and the next strongest was Sridama, so Sridama used to play on the side of Krsna. Whenever Balarama was defeated, He would become enraged. Krsna would diplomatically help His own team, and when Balarama saw that His own team was disloyal due to Krsna's tricks, He would turn to His younger brother Krsna and say, "I shall punish You!" But Krsna would say, "No, You cannot punish Me; Mother Yasoda has entrusted Me in Your care. You can't mistreat Me."

One day, Balarama slapped Krsna, but Krsna went to Mother Yasoda and told on Him. Balarama was very disturbed and said, "I slap You once, and You complain to Your mother that I do not love You? Krsna, how could You do this?" At last Krsna was perplexed and accepted His defeat.

So krsna-lila moves in a crooked way (aher iva gatih premna. . .). This fundamental point, the foundation of our understanding about krsna-lila has been given by Rupa Goswami in this verse. He says, "Don't be eager to find reason everywhere in the pastimes of divinity. They are naturally crooked. In krsna-lila we shall find that although no party is defective, still, one will find fault with another and begin a quarrel. No defect can be found there. But still, for the necessity of lila, false defects are found, and some quarrel begins. This is the meaning of lila, pastimes: what we find here by necessity flows there automatically. We can't try to apply our reason or our standard of measurement to the movements of the infinite. And whatever gain we have made by connecting with that flow of lila will be lost in our attempts to measure it; that will be the only consequence of our analysis. So we should try to have a taste of lila with a submissive attitude. Sometimes reason, logic, and analysis are necessary, but only to preach to the people in general who have a lower understanding. Only for the purpose of preaching to people addicted to reason do we have to take the help of reason. But when devotion becomes automatic, anuraga, then both reason and

scripture are left in the subterranean position. There is no place for scriptural arguments there. To a certain extent, reason is necessary for our development up to vaidhi-bhakti, the elementary stages of devotion. But above that, it has no use.

Anuraga-bhajana is automatic; that is the nature of lila: *aher iva gatih premna*. Everything there moves by His sweet will. Sweet will means that it is not a fixed program. It moves in such a way that we can't say, "It will pass by this road."

When the Maharaja of Mysore used to drive into town, he would not speak to his driver, giving him directions which way to go, because if any fixed program were arranged, then his life might be in danger. So whenever he would come to a crossing in the road, he would touch his stick to a particular shoulder of the driver. If at the crossing, the Maharaja wanted to go to the right, he would touch the driver on his right shoulder. In this way, he would never disclose which way he would go, but only at the last moment he would beckon the driver to take a particular course.

So Krsna's divine movements are kept in reserve by His sweet will: "All Rights Reserved." We want to search for some law above His sweet will, but this is inconsistent. It is self-contradictory. On the one side we say that Krsna moves by His own sweet will, but on another side we try to find some law governing His movement. This is a contradiction. Lila moves by sweet will. When we say it is lila, then we can't give any shape to that. We can say that it was shown in a particular place in a particular way. But we cannot be sure whether today the same course will be taken.

This is why we find differences in the explanations given about different lilas in different ages. Jiva Goswami has explained that the reason for different descriptions of the pastimes of the Lord in the Puranas is because at one time that lila was played in one way, and another time it was played in another way. So we find differences even in the explanations of the same pastime.

Scholars may challenge: "Why is it that somewhere in Padma Purana the lila is mentioned in this way, but the Bhagavata Purana reveals the description in another way? Why does Harivamsa differ from Mahabharata?" We say that in different kalpas, or ages, the pastimes are enacted in different ways. In infinite ways a particular lila of the Lord may be represented within this world, because He is infinite, independent, and absolute. So leaving aside all doubts and

suspicions, we shall be most generous in approaching the absolute, free from all inhibitions. We shall approach Him with that spirit, and try more and more to leave aside our past prejudices and precedents, the records of our past experience.

We shall approach Him remembering that He is still living. It is not a stereotyped thing. We should not expect only what was done once before. If we expect the same thing it will only reassure us by its repetition that He is not a living thing; that Divinity is under historical law. Should we think that in the past He showed Himself in a particular way, so He is compelled to show Himself in that way always? Is He not living today? Can He not show anything new? At every moment, every second, He can show everything in quite a new way. So our heart should open wide when we approach the highest authority of the absolute plane of play. That means surrender must be increased to no limit. Surrender is limitless, and His play or lila is also limitless. With that sort of deep vision, we shall try to read His lila. So although Brahma and the other gods and gurus and the givers of many sastras may have given some description of His pastimes, we shall have to realize that Krsna's pastimes are not bound by their descriptions. Krsna is not confined within a cage. So for this reason, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu did not hesitate to give a description of the bewilderment of Brahma (brahma-vimohana-lila). Brahma was bewildered in krsna-lila in Vrndavana, and again when Brahma went to have an interview with Krsna in Dvaraka, we find the same condition. The boundary of the sweet will of the infinite is such that anything can be accommodated there, and even Lord Brahma, the creator of the universe, can be perplexed by Krsna.

All these pastimes are like so many lighthouses showing us which way to go. Brahma is our guru, but he was bewildered by Krsna. And Vedavyasa, the universal guru, was also chastised by Narada. Narada was put to the test many times. All these examples are showing us the way, they are pointing out the direction. It is said, *srutibhir vimrgyam*: The authentic books about the revealed truth are only showing the way. They say: "Go in this direction. Where? We do not exactly know, but you may go in this direction." They are only showing the direction. All the *srutis*, the guidance given by the scholars of revealed truth, give some direction: "Go this way, in this direction, and perhaps you may find it."

Krsna says: *Vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo*: "All the Vedas are intended to reveal Me, the infinite." They mean to show how the infinite is moving. If I analyze one atom within my fist, I can analyze it again and again and reanalyze it

to no end. It is already within my fist, and yet it is infinite. So it has been said that we may get the maximum benefit by surrendering. Krsna says, "Give up all your prejudices and the limitations drawn from the limited world and be open. Then it will be easy for the infinite to cast different shades of light on your soul and your knowing faculty. And then it will be easy for you also to cleanse your plane of understanding, cleanse your glass, the mirror of your heart."

In connection with the infinite you will find that everywhere there is center, nowhere circumference. But to realize this, you must try to live in eternity, in Vaikuntha. Kuntha means "measurement." Vaikuntha means "no crookedness, no limit, no measure." That is Vaikuntha. When Krsna opened His mouth, Yasoda was astonished to find the entire universal creation. Yasoda was nonplused. "What do I see? The whole universe? The infinite in the finite?" At that moment she almost fainted, but then her cat cried aloud. And Krsna, as if He was very much afraid of the sound of the cat, caught hold of His mother out of fear. Then at once, Yasoda's apprehension disappeared. She thought, "Oh, no...He is my son! There is no representation of the infinite within Him; He is my son." And she embraced Him.

When Brahma took away the cowherd boys and calves, he thought that he had created some want in the lila, but he came to find it flowing just as it had been. Not even the least part of it had been disturbed. Krsna had expanded Himself to become the calves and the cowherd boys. When Krsna Himself took the form of all the calves and cowherd boys, then the mothers felt an infinite type of affection, so much so that they could not understand, but were rather entranced, thinking, "How beautiful these boys are!" And the cows were also mad to show their affection to those calves. Then, Brahma thought, "Have those cowherd boys and calves that I have stolen come here stealthily to join Him?" Again he went to see where he had hidden them. He saw, "No, the boys and calves are where I kept them in the caves of the mountain. They are there!" Again he returned to where Krsna was and saw everything continuing as it had been. At that time Brahma surrendered and was reassured. He spoke the following prayer:

naumidya te 'bhravapuse tadidambaraya
 gunjavatamsa-paripicchala-sanmukhaya
 vanyasraje kavalavetravisana-venulaksmasriye
 mrdupade pasupangajaya
 Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.1

"I offer my prayers unto You, O praiseworthy Lord who are the child of the cowherd Nanda. Your complexion is the dark blue color of a thundercloud and You are clad in silk garments that shine like lightning. Your charming face is adorned with gunja-mala ornaments, and Your hair is decorated with a peacock feather. You look beautiful wearing a garland of forest flowers, and that beauty is enhanced by the morsel of food in Your left hand. You carry a buffalo horn and a stick for herding cows tucked beneath Your left arm. You hold a flute and other emblems, and Your feet are as soft as a lotus." That is the general meaning of this verse. The internal meaning of this verse, however, is this: "O venerable one, we submit our prayers to You. Who are You? You are un-seeable, un-feelable, unknown, and unknowable. Your complexion is the color of a black cloud, and therefore You are very difficult to see, but You can be seen because of Your yellow garb." Yellow is Radharani's color. So only by the help of Krsna's potency can it be ascertained who He is. Tadit means lightning. By the help of lightning we can see a black cloud at night. So although Krsna is unknown and unknowable, His potency can reveal Him to us. Brahma says, "You are the venerable entity I have come to know. Now I bow down to You. Your body is like that of a black cloud, and that is some mystic representation. Black generally cannot be detected. But Your dress of yellow color helps us to know what You are. It is carrying some similarity to the yellow dress of Narayana. Your black body and yellow dress hints towards the personification of Narayana. You are unknown and unknowable Yourself. But Your yellow dress - Your potency - makes You known to us.

"And You come down to our level as if You were one in our position. You are dressed as a cowherd boy, playing in the jungle with a lump of foodstuffs in Your hand. That deceives us in ascertaining who You are. And You adore ordinary things. Even the garland that You wear is collected from ordinary jungle flowers. Your taste appears to be for lower things.

"And all these signs are misleading us. You take a morsel of food in Your hand and run after cows. That is a sign of being low-class. The higher-caste people like brahmanas and ksatriyas cannot move like this or behave in such a way with their food. The instrument you carry - a bamboo flute - is also unsophisticated. And Your stride is short. All this is misleading us to have a lower conception of You. You are hiding Yourself, so how can we understand You? What fault is there on our part, then, for not recognizing Your supremacy? It is difficult to accept that You, Krsna, are the master of everything.

"You have so many plain ornaments. We don't find anything that is gorgeous or filled with splendor here in Vrndavana. We are accustomed to find those things in Vaikuntha. But this is new. You have come here to show Your playful pastimes. Here in Vrndavana we have come across a new conception. And it is wonderful, plain, and charming. Plain, yet most attractive. With simple ordinary things You have decorated Yourself, but You are so extraordinarily charming. It is impossible to understand and to describe. Generally in this world, the position of cowherd boys is of no real significance. They represent the lower section of society. But here in Vrndavana, such a position is so wonderful and charming that we find You all-attractive - hypnotizing us.

"And Your movement is very slow but sure. Your movement is such that You don't care for anything else in this world. Though You are in a lower position, Your posture is such that apparently You don't care for anything in this world. In You we find the highest conception garbed in a very plain way - but a very wonderful way. In connection with You, things of ordinary value become charming. Although I am the Creator and have created everything, I fail to understand this sort of creation. I am proud that I have created so many things in the world, but I am overwhelmed to see the beauty of the environment here in Vrndavana. Here Your movement is slow, but sure and beautiful. You may be the son of that human being who keeps the cows; this is not a very high status in society or in the scriptures, but it is the nature of Your personality that whatever You do, You make it hold the highest position. What is this! Whoever You may be, my vanity is defeated. I take refuge at Your holy feet - I surrender. Please help me to understand what You really are." In this way, Brahma surrendered. And so, Krsna is beyond the understanding even of the creator of the universe. He is infinite. And He is infinite not only in the consideration of space, but also in the consideration of time - He is infinite in every sort of consideration. Infinite. His infinite potency is represented in consciousness, in existence, and then in dealings of love."

The scriptures give us three conceptions of the infinite: Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. The Brahman conception is the allcomprehensive infinite. Whatever we can conceive is within it. Paramatma is the smallest of the small: anor aniyam. Whatever you can conceive of that is small, it is smaller than that. And the Bhagavan, or personal conception of Godhead, is of two types: one is as the master of infinite majesty and power, and the other is of absolute sweetness.

Jiva Goswami has given the essential meaning of Bhagavan in his Bhakti-Sandarbha. He says, bhagavan bhajaniya-sarva-sad-guna visistha. By Bhagavan, he describes this aspect of infinite: bhajaniya, worshipable. When we come in touch with Him, then we want to surrender ourselves for His satisfaction - that type of infinite. There are various types of infinite. The highest conception of the infinite is bhajaniya guna visistha: He is so beautiful and attractive that He is attracting all to surrender to Him. No other conception of the infinite, neither infinite space, nor time, nor anything else can approach this highest conception of the infinite: the all-attractive infinite. All the other aspects of the infinite - infinite time, infinite space, infinite power - are external. But infinite love which attracts love and selfsurrender is the highest type of infinite. And that is Krsna.

Attraction is the most fundamental element everywhere. All else can be eliminated and forgotten if we come in touch with attraction and love. Everything can be ignored if we are in connection with love. The fulfillment of our existence, of all existence, of everything, is in love. Love is the principle in the center which is the only fulfillment of all existence. The very gist of existence is there; it can't be ignored or challenged by any other forms or aspects of our substantial existence. It is unchallengeable and absolute. Whatever we may experience, the most central need for fulfillment remains: love. The absolute king of everything is love. Nothing can stand in comparison with it. Coming in clash with the principle of love, all will have to accept defeat. Mahaprabhu pointed out that this is the most substantial thing in this world.

Madhvacarya, in his conception of how one should see the acarya, the spiritual master, could not harmonize Brahma's bewilderment. After all, he is the sampradaya guru, the foremost guru of the tradition, the Brahma-Madhva-sampradaya. So Madhvacarya omitted these two chapters on the illusion of Brahma from Srimad-Bhagavatam. But Mahaprabhu did not. He accepted Sridhara Swami's edition, which is in accordance with the suddhadvaita philosophy of Visnuswami. The Visnuswami sampradaya are followers of ragamarga, spontaneous devotion. Sridhara Swami included those two chapters with his commentary, and Mahaprabhu accepted that, and it is corroborated in Caitanya-caritamrta. Madhvacarya could not accommodate the idea that guru may be seduced. He could not tolerate that guru may not know everything, may not be omniscient, but Mahaprabhu could.

४१

प्रेम मुग्धं नित्यं कीर्तनाकुलारितान्तिकम्
 स्नानं दहन्यं वारिं दहन्यं भूमिं कुन्दं देशकम्
 प्रेम कुन्दं राधिकारिण्यं शास्त्रं वन्दनादरम्
 प्रेमं दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

41

prema-mugdha-ñṛtya-kīrttanākulārīṭāntikam
 snāna-dhanya-vāri-dhānya-bhūmi-kunḍa-deśakam
 prema-kunḍa-rādhikāṅhya-śāstra-vandanādaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The Lord was filled with feelings of bliss and love and he danced and sang the glories of Krishna. He came to the sacred pond Sri Radha Kunda. He blessed the water of the paddy fields at Radha Kunda by bathing in it, thereby revealing that holy site. Then he sang verses from the scriptures glorifying that pool of divine love, named after the Lord's consort Srimate Radharani. I sing with joy the glories of my golden lord, Sri Gaurasundara the beautiful.

Illumination:

Sri Radhakunda

by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur

We should all aspire to be Mathura people. We should have a proper conception of spiritual Mathura instead of the mundane Mathura which is the place of enjoyment of people with very low aspirations. Our Sahajiya brothers think that they can have access to Mathura by paying the railway fare. It is by surrendering ourselves to the Preceptor's Feet that we can have an abode in Mathura. Otherwise we cannot get an entrance into the transcendental region.

We should approach the Guru who can confer on us the eight things i.e., Name, Mantra, etc. The Name is the Transcendental Sound and Mantras are incantations. The Name is identical with the Namee. The Mantra is required in order to reach that situation in which the Name can be properly chanted.

The Son of Sachi is the Supreme Lord Himself. Damodar Swarup is the head of the Gaudiyas who are the transcendental servitors of Shri Krishna Chaitanya. Rupa and Sanatana were sent to Mathura by Shri Krishna Chaitanya to diffuse transcendental knowledge there. There are seven Puris (localities) which can give salvation and among them Mathura is the most supreme. Gosthavati signifies the place where Shri Krishna was feeding His cows. (The sound "Go" has various meanings such as Knowledge, the Senses, the animal cow, etc.).

Another holy spot is Radhakunda, a tank where Shri Krishna got rid of the sin he had incurred by killing a cow named Aristanemi. He killed Aristotelianism or the rationalistic process of reasoning of this imperfect world. When Krishna wanted to join hands with Radhika, Aristanemi came forward to disturb Him, because Radhika was thought by many people to be the wife of a milkman named Abhimanyu. This Aristanemi was the incarnation of mundane knowledge, and Krishna killed him. For that act He expiated by taking a dip in the Radhakunda. This kunda is the mental speculation of Radha. The eternal land of our abode should be Radhakunda. By the border of Radhakunda we should have our groves. There are millions of groves on the banks of Radhakunda.

४२

तिन्तिदी तलस्थं यामुनोर्मिं ब्हावनाप्लुतम्
 निर्जनैक रादिहकात्म ब्हाव वैब्रवाव्रितम्
 श्याम रादिहकाप्त गौर तत्त्व ब्हित्तिकाकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

42

tintiḍī-talastha-yāmunormmi-bhāvanāplutam
 nirjanaika-rādhikātma-bhāva-vaibhavāvṛtam
 śyāma-rādhikāpta-gaura-tattva-bhittikākaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

At the place known as Imlitala, on the bank of the Yamuna river, Sri Gaurasundara sat beneath the ancient tamarind tree growing there since the previous age. He sat beneath the tree's branches and, seeing the dancing waves of the river, the memory of jala-keli was aroused within him. He became immersed in thoughts of those confidential sporting pastimes of Lord Krishna in the water with the Gopis. Undisturbed, in that secluded place, his whole being was pervaded with thoughts of Radhika, her beauty and her sweetness. This place Imlitala is the place of origin of Gaura-tattva, for it was here that Syamasundar Krishna became totally radiant in the halo and the heartfelt mood of Sri Radha. Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitanyadev eternally dwells in this place, his thoughts captured by the inconceivable sweetness of Sri Radha's feelings of devotion. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

४३

शारिका शुकोक्ति कौतुकाद्दह्य लास्य लापितम्
 रादिहिका व्यतीत कामदेव काम मोहितम्
 प्रेम वश्य क्रिश्ण ब्हाव ब्भक्त ह्रिच् चमत्करम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

43

śārikā-śukokti-kautukāḍhya-lāśya-lāpitam
 rādhikā-vyatīta-kāmadeva-kāma-mohitam
 prema-vaśya-kṛṣṇa-bhāva-bhakta-hṛc-camatkaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Lord Gauranga mentioned a witty conversation that was carried on between a parrot and his mate. In their talk, Lord Krishna, the transcendental Cupid, is described to be illusioned due to His deep feelings of separation from Sri Radha.

*radha-sange yada bhati tada 'madana-mohanah'
 ayatha visva-moho 'pi svayam 'madana-mohitah'*

The female parrot said, "When Lord Krishna is with Radharani, He is the enchanter of Cupid; otherwise, when He is alone, He Himself is enchanted by amorous feelings, even though He enchants the whole universe." By this pastime, Lord Gauranga charmed the devotees' hearts by showing that Lord Krishna's sweetness and charm ultimately lies in the fact that He can be subdued by pure love. I offer my obeisances to that beautiful Golden Lord, Gauranga Sundar, the divine form of Krishna prema.

Illumination:

Sri Giriraj Aroti

by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

*jaya jaya girirajer aratika sobha
 sri-braja-mandala majhe jaga mana lobha*

All glories to the beautiful arati of Sri Giriraj which is going on in Sri Vraja-mandal, attracting the minds of all living entities of the universe.

*pramoda-madana-lila sri-radha-ramana
yatha nitya-lila kare laye sakhi-gana*

Lord Sri Radha-Raman is eternally playing His joyful Loving Pastimes there in the association of the Sakhis of Srimati Radharani.

*malati-madhavi-kunja kandare kandare
nigudha nikunja-lila hari manohare*

Here deep within the groves of malati flowers and madhavi creepers, the confidential Pastimes of the charming Lord Hari are going on.

*syama-kunda radha-kunda kusuma sarovara
manasa ganga dana-ghati yara abhyantara*

Within this holy place are Syama Kunda, Radha Kunda, Kusum Sarovar, Manasa Ganga and Danaghati.

*sri-govinda-kunda lilasthali nahi sima
divanisi-bhakta-vrnda kare parikrama*

With Sri Govinda Kunda, these holy places of divine Pastimes are without limit. Day and night the devotees are performing circumambulation in worship.

*'sridhar-swami-sevasram' parama sobhana
yatha nitya-seva kare saraswata-gana*

Here there is the supremely beautiful Sridhar Swami Sevasram where devotees of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math are performing their eternal service.

*abhinna sri krsna jnane bhajibara tare
mahaprabhu samarpila raghunatha kare*

Sriman Mahaprabhu gave Sri Sri Giriraj-jiu to Sri Raghunath Goswami so that Sri Das Goswami could worship His Lordship knowing Him to be non-different from Krishna.

*goswami sri-raghunatha dasere smariya
nirantara seva kare antarmmana haiya*

The devotees of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math worship Sri Sri Giriraj-jiu in a deep mood of devotion in remembrance of Sri Raghunath Das Goswami.

*jaya giri-govarddhan divya-rasalaya
rupa-sanatana-jiva-raghunathasraya*

All glories to Sri Giri Govarddhan which is the abode of divine Rasa and the shelter of Sri Rupa, Sanatan, Jiva and Raghunath Goswamis.

*surendra-munindra-siva-suka-mahajana
dekkena arati-sobha durllabha-darsana*

The beauty of the arati of Sri Giriraj-jiu which is rare and precious is being seen by Lord Indra, Narada Muni, Lord Siva, Suka Goswami and all the great personalities.

*sevyo o sevaka-rupe nitya parakasa
sanande arati dekhe e adhama dasa*

Sri Sri Giriraj-jiu is eternally manifested as both the worshipable Lord and the servitor Lord. This fallen servant sees the arati of Sri Giriraj-jiu with great ecstasy.

४४

श्री प्रयाग द्दहाम रूप राग ब्भक्ति सन्चरम्
 श्री सनातनादि काशि ब्भक्ति शिक्शहनादरम्
 वैश्णवानुरोद्दह ब्भेद निर्व्विशेश पन्जरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्
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śrī-prayāga-dhāma-rūpa-rāga-bhakti-sañcaram
 śrī-sanātanādi-kāśi-bhakti-śikṣaṇādaram
 vaiṣṇavānurodha-bheda-nirvviśeṣa-pañjaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

At Prayag-dham, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu empowered Srila Rupa Goswami to understand and teach that the ultimate objective of one's devotional practices is to serve Sri Krishna within the group of the milkmaids of Vrindaban, for the Gopis are able to relish the sweet mellows of love found in Krishna's amorous pastimes. At Kasi, He affectionately taught Srila Sanatan Goswami and other devotees many topics of pure dedication, including knowledge of reality (sambandha), the means of applying that knowledge (abhideya), and the ultimate goal of devotional service, which is to obtain pure love of Sri Sri Radha Govinda (prajojana). At Kasi, the Lord destroyed the stubborn pride of the Advaita-Vedantist impersonalist philosophers, whose philosophy promotes self-adoration and is ultimately based on deep seated enviousness and narrow mindedness. The Lord freed these philosophers from their illusion, giving them the opportunity to worship the Supreme Person.

I sing, I sing with joy, the unending glories of my Golden Lord Gaurasundara the Beautiful, the Divine Abode of Pure Love.

Illumination:

Heart Within and God Overhead
 by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

If we can understand that the cause of all our problems is within us then we will be able to get out of that very quickly. It is difficult. We are accustomed to complain. According to our suffering we complain against others, that they are responsible for my misery. But this is misunderstanding. When we are able to

realise that misery comes from within, sometimes individually, sometimes collectively, when we see that it comes from within and not from the outside, then we will get relief very quickly. The experts are of such opinion.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam it is said; “When misery comes to visit you, you should know it is the grace of the Lord, not only the negative side – to tolerate the misery that I am experiencing, the results of my past bad actions; not only that but with some positive tinge of nectar – it is the grace of the Lord. His sanction is connected with this particular incident and He is the All-good, the Unquestionable-good, so there must be some good object in this.”

*tat te 'nukampam susamiksamano
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam
hrd-vag-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te
jivta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.8)*

It is His grace. He wants me to be purified as soon as possible, to release me as quickly as possible from the results of my own actions. This is His grace. If you can feel this to be so then you can get out of the misery which comes from within us.

Nothing can come without His sanction and when His sanction is there then he is connected there, and His connection means His grace. He is all gracious and we are to look for that.

We are to invite that element from the great world above and thereby promote our fortune, our fate to be connected with that wave of daya (kindness). No chaos; everything is cosmos, and the cosmos is connected with the All-good. We are to see like that. Kuntidevi invited adversity, “Always keep me within adverse circumstances so that my heart can dive deep for a prayer to You for my welfare. If I am amused by the apparent pleasing environment then I will lose my memory of You and that will be my greatest loss.”

These are the sweet instructions of the Bhagavat, and in the Gita we find the outward advice:

*manapamanayos tulyas tulyo mitrari-paksayoh
sarvarambha-partyagi gunatitah sa ucyate
(Bhagavad-gita 14.25)*

Both sides, loss and gain, both are transient so receive them with equal spirit. Stand erect and meet both sides, success or failure, both are equal because the very plane in which they appear is a concoction like a dream. To become a king in a dream or to become a beggar in the street, in a dream, both are equally false. So loss or gain in this plane is all false, don't allow yourself to be disturbed by loss or gain, by victory or by failure. Prepare yourself to receive grace by neglecting the adverse, apparently injurious environment. Prepare yourself to be a student of this higher standard, neglecting all the junk that comes to you.

This will be better and more ambitious than to confine your ambition to this mortal world. When the reins are removed everything goes freely to Krishna, just as a horse will run freely when it is unreined. So cure yourself quickly for a place is waiting for you.

Krishna is the Absolute but He says, aham bhakta paradhino, "I am controlled by My devotees, what can I do? I am not independent, I have my partiality. I cannot avoid the request of my devotees, that is my weakness. These who have left everything and have come to depend on me, how can I discourage them? How is it possible for me? Who have left everything for me and want nothing in return, if anyhow, some request comes from their side, then how can I deny that? It is possible?

*aham bhakta-paradhino hy asvatantra iva dvija
sadhubhir-grasta-hrdayo bhaktair-bhakta-jana-priyah
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.63)*

"Though I am the Absolute, still of my own accord I have come to a relative position; a father, a husband, a son. All these relative positions I observe of my own accord although I am the Absolute. My devotees are all depending on me and so I shall have to look after them. The Absolute does not mean He is all cruel but rather He must be sympathetic, what can I do?"

We see the Lord's favour to His devotees in the case of Ambarisa and Durvasa. Durvasa was a great sage and Ambarisa Maharaj was a king. While waiting for

Durvasa and his followers to return from bathing so that he might honour them by giving them prasada, Ambarisa took a drop of water to observe the end of the Ekadasi fast. Durvasa became enraged considering that Ambarisa had insulted him by breaking his fast before serving him.

Durvasa summoned yogic fire to consume Ambarisa, but Ambarisa remained unharmed. Suddenly the Lord's Sudarshan Chakra (disc weapon) appeared to punish Durvasa for persecuting the innocent Ambarisa, and Durvasa fled for fear of his life. Finally finding no escape, Durvasa entered Vaikuntha and pleaded with Narayana to withdraw His weapon. Lord Narayan addressed Durvasa thus. "You demand that you are a Brahmin and demand that you are a sannyasi, but you fled for fear of your life while Ambarisa, he did not even step back when you summoned fire with the intention of burning him. He did not even take one step back no, he stood firm and with humility, thinking "If I am a culprit then let the punishment come to me."

He did not falter, but you – when my Sudarshan came to charge you – you were flying from this place to that, to all corners of the world, running for fear of your life. Then who holds the more dignified position, you or Ambarisa? You are a brahmin and he is a ksatriya, but you observed the Ekadasi vrata and on Dwadasi at the time of paran (break-fast) you showed respect to the Ekadasi vrata for me and he also only did that. He showed respect to me by properly observing the Ekadasi vrata but you thought he had dishonoured you. You are his guest and before feeding you he has taken a drop of water to observe the end of the Ekadasi day and he did it with conscience to me.

You yourself did that vrata and he also did that and only for me, not for self-gratification. But you could not tolerate, you thought that he had dishonoured you. So you say that you are a brahmin, very near to me and that he is a ksatriya, he is far off. He is a grihasta, and you are a sannyasi, you are nearer to me; but this is only fashion because practically Ambarisa is nearer to me. He is not afraid of receiving any punishment and even as we speak he is waiting for you. He is fasting, thinking, "My guest I have not fed. While Durvasa is running hither and thither, still unfed then how can I feed myself?" He is still standing, waiting and when you return he will feed you and only then will he take Prasad. What do you say? When my devotees have left everything and have surrendered fully to me then should I not protect them?

A little gratitude I must have? Or am I a slave to your formality? What do you think Durvasa? Go to him. You will have to go to him and see how magnanimous he is. Still unfed, standing waiting for you. Go and see?" After hearing this, Durvasa returned to Ambarisa and was able to appreciate his position. Ambarisa came to him with folded hands and like a criminal he began, "Oh what have I done? All these trouble have come to you brahmin, my guest, and only for my fault. I am the culprit, I am offender, please be propitiated by me." And Durvasa fell flat at his feet, "Yes, you are so magnanimous. This is only possible for the devotees of Narayan. You are so great. We boast of our brahminic birth and our yogic attempt, but you, you are really the most magnanimous of all people we are far below." And in this way Durvasa began,

*aho ananta-dasanammahattvam drstam adya me
krtagaso 'pi yad rajan mangalani samihase
(Srimad Bhagavatam 9.5.14)*

"I have seen the greatness of the servitors of the Anantadev, Sri Narayan. You are so magnanimous that although I am an offender you have prayed for me. You hold an unparalleled position in the whole universe." In this way Durvasa began to preach. Durvasa whose very nature is to always find fault in others and give them punishment by his yogic power. That is his nature, but he began to sing the song in praise of the devotees like Ambarisa.

So we will have to become cent percent optimistic and leave no room for pessimism. Our only apprehension will be that I may not commit any offence, especially towards a Vaishnava. We shall have to become very alert to this. So precious, so valuable is the fortune for which we are aspiring. Se we must be very, very careful to guard against jealousy, envy from arising in us from any place. We are connected with some great force, so as much as possible we must remain cautious, careful that no disturbance will come out from us to do away with our pure aspiration. So Mahaprabhu has told us,

*trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirttaniya sada harih*

In one word – conscious. You must be conscious. Conscious that you are living in a plane that is ultimately worthless, no value, Trnad api sunicena – don't go to oppose anyone. There is no meaning to any opposition. It is all fictitious so why

should I give opposition to something that is all fictitious. Taror api sahisnuna – and if any opposition should come to you don't care for that either. That is also unreal. Their motivation is superficial. That should not affect your inner train of thought.

So don't care about any opposition coming to you. Don't create any opposition to others, and still if any opposition will come to you try not care for that. It is all futile. Amanina – and don't hanker after any appreciation from the ordinary public, for name and fame. They do not know what is what, and therefore their appreciation has got no value, don't hanker after that. Manadena – still you must be alert to give them due respect, otherwise they will come to disturb you. Like a bribe, offer some respect to them and go on with your own company. Without being disturbed, as much as possible, try to make progress as rapidly as you can. You do not know, your future circumstance may cut off your opportunity, your connection. So as much as you are able to utilise your present circumstance, try to do that.

“Trust no future however pleasant, let the dead past bury its dead, act, act in the living present, with heart within and God overhead.”

With this policy to guide us, go on towards the Absolute, the sweet fulfilment of your life.

४५

न्यासि लक्ष्म नायक प्रकाशानन्द तारकम्
 न्यासि राशि काशि वासि क्रिश्न नाम पारकम्
 व्यास नारदादि दत्त वेददही दहुरन्दहरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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nyāsi-lakṣa-nāyaka-prakāśānanda-tārakam
 nyāsi-rāśi-kāśi-vāsi-kṛṣṇa-nāma-pārakam
 vyāsa-nārādādi-datta-vedadhī-dhurandharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanyadev rescued Prakasananda Saraswati, the leader of hundreds of thousands of Advaita-Vedanta sannyasis at Kasi, who had fallen into the empty hole of impersonalism, a black hole full of nothingness. The Lord delivered all the people of Kasi by giving them the immortal gift of the holy names of Krishna. The holy names alone give a soul real inner fulfillment and final liberation. Sri Chaitanyadev is the saviour who dispenses the eternal message of the scriptures of the Veda as handed down through the succession of spiritual teachers beginning with Narada and Vyasa.

I sing with joy the unending glories of Sri Chaitanyadev, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Guru and His Grace

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

In Srimad-Bhagavatam, Krishna says, "First I transmitted Vedic knowledge to this world through Brahma. And that was entrusted to his disciples: the four Kumaras, Marichi, Angira, and other sages." The knowledge was first invested in them and later in books.

First it was presented in the form of sound, not script. Gradually it became fixed in writing. In the beginning, it descended directly through sound from one man to another, from lip to ear. No script or writing was invented at that time, but knowledge was contained in the form of sound. Passing through the ear to the mouth, and again to the ear of another, gradually it became lost. In connection

with the mediator sometimes it becomes lost and disfigured, distorted, and then again the Lord feels the necessity of appearing in this world (*yada yada hi dharmasya*).

Sometimes Krishna comes himself, and sometimes he sends a normal thinking man to reinstate the standard of true religion. Krishna says, "This karma-yoga that I have spoken to you, Arjuna, I spoke first to Surya, and from Surya it was passed down from generation to generation. And so it has become mutilated and disfigured. Again I am speaking that very same thing to you today." The enervating plane gradually erodes the truth. The truth is bright when it first appears, but gradually with the contact of this enervating plane, it becomes weak, disfigured, and demoralized, and so Krishna appears from time to time to rejuvenate it, and bring about a renaissance.

Here in the material world, the material consideration is always tampering with the spiritual current; the purity of the truth is always being disturbed. So, sometimes Krishna has to come himself, and sometimes he sends his personal representative to again reestablish the truth in its former and pure state.

When the truth is sufficiently covered, disturbed, and mutilated by the influence of maya, the illusory energy, then an attempt is made by the devotees of the Lord, or by the Lord himself, to rejuvenate it and return it to the previous standard of purity. We cannot expect truth to continue here in this world of misunderstanding without any tampering or interruption. It is not possible.

Krishna consciousness, the spiritual Conception of the highest level, descends by flowing down from one level to the next, just as from the peak of a mountain, the Ganges flows in a zigzag way, from one peak to another. Sometimes the water of the Ganges mixes with the current of the river Saraswati. That water is not to be considered Ganges water. When the water of the Saraswati joins the current of the Ganges, it is considered to be Ganges water. When the two rivers meet, the water that flows away from the Ganges is not the Ganges; but when the Saraswati's waters enter into the current of the Ganges, it becomes the Ganges. That water will purify us, whatever its point of origin may have been. There is a saying that whatever water is deep within the current of the Ganges riverbed, is the real Ganges water. That water will purify us, whatever its point of origin may have been.

The purifying potency of the water has nothing to do with the water we can feel and see. What can we see with our physical eyes? The current of the Ganges is pure. When the spirit and sanction is there, it is a living thing, and can purify everyone.

So, the very gist of the guru parampara, the disciplic succession, is siksa, the spiritual teaching, and wherever it is to be traced, there is guru. One who has the transcendental eye, the divine eye, will recognize the guru wherever he appears. One who possesses knowledge of absolute divine love in purity - he is guru. Otherwise the guru parampara is only a body parampara: a succession of bodies. Then the caste brahmanas, the caste goswamis, will continue with their trade, because body after body, they are getting the mantra. But their mantra is dead. We are after a living mantra, and wherever we can trace the living tendency for a higher type of devotional service, we shall find that there is our guru. One who has that sort of vision awakened will be able to recognize the guru wherever he may appear.

Initiation into the mantra means to impart real knowledge and devotional sentiment from one to another. And that must be genuine. Nothing can be known about a homeopathic globule by an outer physical inspection, but the potency is within. So also within the mantra the important thing is the type of thought or sentiment which is imparted through that sound. The impersonalists have got the same mantra, and are also chanting the holy name of Krishna, but that sort of name will vanish in the brahmajyoti. They won't be able to cross the Viraja, the river between the material and spiritual worlds. When a mayavadi chants the name of Krishna, Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that his chanting of the name of Krishna is just like thunder to the holy body of Krishna. It does not produce any soothing effect.

The Gaudiya Math deals with reality, not with the frame. We are trying to understand what is what in the spiritual thought-world. We are not enchanted or captured by the mere form. We are interested in the step by step development in spiritual thought. In his Upadesamrta (10), Srila Rupa Goswami has said, karmibhyah parito hareh priyataya vyaktim yayur jnaninas, tebhyo jnana-vimukta bhakti-paramah premaika nisthas tatah. "Out of many materialists one may be a philosopher. Out of many philosophers, one may become liberated and take to devotional service. Out of many devotees, one may attain pure love of Krishna. He is the best of all." We are interested in understanding this gradation: what is

the Viraja river, what is the spiritual sky, the planet of Lord Siva, the Vaikuntha world of Visnu, Lord Rama's Ayodhya, and then Krishna in Dwaraka, Mathura, and Vrndavana? We want to know the realistic view of the whole gradation of devotional thought. Krishna shows this gradation in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.14.15) where he says:

*na tatha me priyatama
atma-yonir na shankarah
na ca sankarsano na srir
naivatma ca yatha bhavan*

"Neither Brahma, nor Siva, nor Sankarsana of Vaikuntha, nor the goddess of fortune Laksmidevi, nor even my own self is as dear to me as you. You are my favorite, Uddhava."

We have to follow the spirit; otherwise after Jahnava devi, the wife of Lord Nityananda, up to Vipina Goswami, from whom Bhaktivinoda Thakura took initiation, there are so many unknown lady gurus. Through them, the mantra came to Vipina Goswami, and from him Bhaktivinoda Thakura received the mantra. We accept Bhaktivinoda Thakura, but should we count all those ladies in our disciplic succession? What was their realization?

We are slaves of the truth. We are beggars for the pure current of truth that is constantly flowing: the fresh current. We are not charmed by any formality. I will bow down my head wherever I find the river of nectar coming down to me. When one is conscious that the Absolute Truth is descending to him from the highest domain, he will think, "I must surrender myself here."

Mahaprabhu says to Ramananda Raya, kiba vipra, kiba nyasi, sudra kene naya, yei krsna-tattva vetta sei guru haya. "Wherever the truth appears, wherever the nectar of divine ecstasy descends, I shall offer myself as a slave. That is my direct concern." Whatever form it takes doesn't matter much; the form has some value, but if there is any conflict, the inner spirit of a thing should be given immense value over its external cover. Otherwise, if the spirit has gone away, and the bodily connection gets the upper hand, our so-called spiritual life becomes sahajiya, a cheap imitation.

४६

ब्रह्म सूत्र ब्रह्म किं ह नारदोपदेशकम्
 श्लोक तुर्य्य ब्रह्महन्त किं ह सम्प्रकाशकम्
 शब्द वर्तनान्त हेतु नाम जीव निस्तरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya-kṛṣṇa-nāradopadeśakam
 śloka-turyya-bhāṣanānta-kṛṣṇa-samprakāśakam
 śabda-varttanānta-hetu-nāma-jīva-nistaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

When Sri Chaitanyadev was in Kasi, he taught the assembled impersonalist renunciates that the ancient scripture Srimad Bhagavatam is the natural commentary on the Brahmasutra (the philosophy section of the Veda). The proper understanding of reality presented in the Srimad Bhagavatam has been passed down through a succession of spiritual teachers from Sri Krishna to Brahma, Narada, Vyasa and his disciples (*guru-parampara*). In Sri Chaitanya's explanation of the four root Verses of Bhagavatam (*catuh-sloki*), He brilliantly revealed the truth of Sri Krishna, who is the non-dual Supreme Absolute Truth, the self evident spiritual reality of immortal consciousness and bliss. He taught that the transcendental sound vibration of the holy names of God (*śabda-brahma*) alone awards the individual soul its highest attainment, which is to enter into the liberated, positive life of devotional service to Sri Krishna.

I sing with joy the unending glories of my Golden Lord, Sri Gaurasundara the Beautiful, the Divine Abode of Pure Love.

Illumination:

Acintya bheda abheda tattva

The Doctrine of Distinction and Non-Distinction

by Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura

(Sri Chaitanya Siksamrtam, chapter 5)

Every thing in existence is but a transformation of the energy of the Lord. This is the teaching of Sri Chaitanya to the Advaita sanyasis of Kasi.

In his Vedanta sutra, Vyasadeva has described that everything is a transformation of the Lord's energy. Shankaracharya, however, has misled the world by commenting that Vyasadeva was mistaken. Thus Shankaracharya has raised great opposition to theism throughout the entire world.

According to Shankaracharya, by accepting the theory of the transformation of the energy of the Lord one falls into an illusion by indirectly proposing that the Absolute Truth itself is transformed. According to Shankaracharya, the Absolute is formless and impersonal. But it is the Lord's energy which is transformed, not the Lord himself, and the transformation of energy is a proven fact. It is the false bodily conception that the changing body is the self that is an illusion. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of potency and by his inconceivable energies he has transformed the material cosmic manifestation.

Using the example of the touchstone (philosophers stone) which, which by its energy turns iron to gold and yet remains the same, Sri Chaitanya said that although the God transforms his innumerable energies and creates the world he always remains unchanged. Although touchstone produces many varieties of valuable jewels it nevertheless remains the same. It does not change its original form.

When we speak of the Supreme as impersonal, we deny his spiritual potencies. Logically, if you accept half of the truth, you cannot understand the whole.

To Sarvabhauma, Sri Chaitanya said:

Vedanta sutra is the summary of all the Upanisads, therefore whatever direct meaning is there in the Upanisads is also recorded in the Vedanta sutra. For each verse the direct meaning must be accepted without interpretation.

To the sannyasis at Varanasi, Mahaprabhu said:

The Vedic sound vibration *omkara* (om, or aum), the principle word in the Vedic literatures, is the basis of all the hymns of the Vedas. Therefore one should accept *omkara* as the sound representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the reservoir of the cosmic manifestation. It is the purpose of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to present *pranava* as the reservoir of all Vedic knowledge. The words "*tat tvam asi*" favoured by Shankaracharya are only a partial explanation of the Vedic knowledge. It is *pranava* that is the *mahavakya*

(supreme statement) in the Vedas. Shankaracharya's followers disregard *omkara* to stress the mantra "*tat tvam asi*".

Vedanta philosophy consists of words spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Narayana in the form of Vyasadeva. The material defects of mistakes, illusions, cheating and sensory defects do not exist in the words of Godhead. The Absolute Truth is described by the Upanisads and Vedanta sutra but one must understand the verses as they are. That is proper understanding. Sripad Shankaracharya has described all the Vedic literatures in terms of indirect meanings. One who hears such explanations is ruined.

According to direct understanding, the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has all spiritual opulences. No one can be equal to or greater than him. Everything about the Supreme Personality of Godhead is spiritual, including his body, opulence and paraphernalia. Mayavada philosophy, however, covering his spiritual opulence, advocates the theory of impersonalism. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of spiritual potencies. Therefore his body, name, fame and entourage are all spiritual. The Mayavadi philosopher, due to ignorance, says that these things such as the body of Krishna are all merely transformations of nature in the material mode of goodness. Shankaracharya, who is an incarnation of Lord Shiva, is faultless because he is a servant carrying out the orders of the Lord, but those who follow his Mayavada philosophy are doomed. They will lose all their advancement in spiritual knowledge.

Pranava or *omkara* is an indirect name of Krishna, the original sound of the Vedas, *sabda brahma*. The noun "*pranava*" is formed from the verb *pranu* (to sound), made from the prefix *pra* (very much) and the verb *nu* (to praise). Therefore *pranava* or *omkara* is the sound incarnation of the Supreme Brahman, the person worthy of our praise and worship.

From *omkara* all the Vedas have appeared. *Pranava* is the seed of the Vedas, the *mahavakya* or principal sound. All other parts of the Vedas are particular statements of relative value. Shankaracharya, the formulator of mayavada philosophy, minimized the prominent position of *omkara* and proclaimed four specialized statements as *mahavakya*: 1. *aham brahmasmi* (I am brahman) 2. *prajnanam brahma* (brahman is knowledge) 3. *tattvam asi* (you are that brahman) 4. *ekam eva advitiam* (there is only one existent being).

Shankaracharya took other statements as the essence of the Vedas and preached exclusive monism. He taught that the conditioned jiva is simply an illusion produced by maya, that brahman is subjected to maya, and that liberation for the jiva is the absence of maya. By this philosophy the pure relation of the soul with the Absolute Being becomes hidden.

The conclusion of all the Vedas has not been considered by the Mayavada philosophers. Thus, Madhvacarya took other Vedic statements and established an opposing philosophy, *dvaitavad*. However, because he did not consider all the Vedic statements the full relation of the soul to the Lord was not revealed. Ramanujacarya as well, in his *visistadvaita* philosophy, did not show the complete relationship. Nimbarka Swami, propounder of *dvaitadvaita*, preached a somewhat incomplete doctrine. Visnu Swami also, in his *suddhadvaita* doctrine, left some ambiguity. In order to establish the eternal nature of love of God, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu gave pure, complete teachings about the relationship of soul with the Lord through the doctrine of *acintya-bhedabheda*. In this way he delivered the world from the darkness of mental speculation.

Mahaprabhu said that the only *mahavakya* is *pranava*. Its meaning is evident in the Upanisads. What the Upanisads teach is perfectly sanctioned by Vyasa in the Vedanta Sutrās. The authentic commentary of the Vedanta sutras is the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. The first sutra teaches that the principle of transformation is the truth. *yato va imani bhutani jayante* (Taittiriya Upanisad) also supports this. The *Bhagavatam* also establishes this truth. Fearing that with the principle of transformation the Supreme Brahman becomes changeable, Shankara established *vivarta-vada*, the theory of illusion. This *vivarta-vada* is the root of all faults.

Parinama-vada, transformation through the Lord's energies, is approved by all scriptures and is the principle of pure existence. If the eternal existence of the Lord's energies is not accepted in *parinama-vada*, then the defects of the Lord falling under illusion and deterioration of the Lord appear. Yet it is not the Lord himself but his energies which are transformed. The Lord is simultaneously distinct from his energies and non-distinct from them, this being possible because the Lord has inconceivably powerful energy. If the eternal, natural, superior energy of the Lord is accepted, then there is no fault in the doctrine of *parinama-vada*, or transformation.

The transformations of the Lord's energy, which give rise to the material universe, are factual, but the Lord does not change. By transformation of the Lord's energies the material world and the souls take their existence. Though gold is produced from the touchstone the touchstone remains unaffected. In this example given by Mahaprabhu, it is clear that Krishna's energies perform the creation, whereas Krishna remains unaffected. It is all the transformation of his energies. By transformation of the *cit sakti* (pure consciousness and existence), the Lord's abode, name, form, qualities, pastimes and the individual souls exist. By transformation of the *maya sakti* (nature), the material world and the subtle and physical bodies of the living beings come into existence. This *parinama-vada* is found everywhere in the Vedanta Sutras and the Upanisads. The gradual evolution of *mahatattva*, *ahankara*, ether, fire, air, water and earth is also *parinamavada*.

After all the efforts of Advaita philosophy, what is left in the mind of the philosopher is an imaginary self and an imaginary world. But in pure *parinama-vada*, by Krishna's will, the material world and the souls are seen as real, true, existent entities. The world is not illusion but a temporary state of transformation, since by Krishna's will it may dissolve. Although the Lord creates the world and enters into it, he remains eternally independent in his form as Krishna. He is always served by his spiritual energies. Only those who can understand this remarkable feature of the Lord are able to taste the Lord's opulence and sweetness. This is the relation of the soul to Krishna.

The soul's relation with the temporary world is like that of a traveler at an inn. The proper way to deal with the world, *yukta vairagya*, arises from a correct understanding of the relation between the soul and the material energy. As long as the correct understanding of temporary and permanent does not arise, the deluded soul cannot perform proper activities. According to Lord Chaitanya's doctrine, the soul's identity and difference from the Lord, and the world's difference and identity with the Lord, are both established as truth. Since this cannot be adjusted by limited human reasoning this eternal difference and non difference is called *acintya* or inconceivable. Though it is inconceivable, logic and reasoning are not dissatisfied, for it is reasonable that God can have inconceivable power. Whatever is established by the Lord's inconceivable power can only be understood by the Lord's mercy.

The ancient sages have taught that logic cannot be applied to the inconceivable, for in inconceivable matters, logic cannot be accepted as a proof. Those who cannot grasp this are most unfortunate.

४७

आत्म राम वाचनादि निर्विशेषह वहन्दनम्
श्रौत वाक्य सार्थकैक चिद्विलास मन्दनम्
दिव्य क्रिश्ण विग्रहादि गौन बुद्धिह दिहक्करम्
प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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ātma-rāma-vācanādi-nirvviśeṣa-khaṇḍanam
śrauta-vākya-sārthakaika-cidvilāsa-maṇḍanam
divya-kṛṣṇa-vigrahādi-gauṇa-buddhi-dhikkaram
prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanya explained sixty one different meanings of the famous atmarama verse of Srimad Bhagavatam, presenting explanations that cut to pieces the Advaita Vedanta doctrine of Shankaracharya. With the support of numerous references from the Vedic literature, he brought to light the charming, sweet nature of the Absolute Being. He revealed that sweet Absolute to be a divine person: Sri Krishna. Sri Chaitanya denounced the false notion of the Advaita Vedantists, who consider the worshipable Deity forms of Sri Krishna to be material bodies formed from matter. I fall at the Feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The plane of misconception by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

Dr. Michael Marchetti: Vaisnavism says that this material nature is real, as it is a reflection of the spiritual world. But it is not real in the same way as the absolute reality of the spiritual world. Could you explain?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Reality is composed of unreal substance and real substance. We may see it like that. This is the world of misconception.

Misconception means "I think something is mine, but really it is not mine." Everything belongs to the Absolute. Everything belongs to him. But we say "it is mine," and we quarrel with each other. Actually, everything within this world is the property of another (Krishna). But as a result of misconception, we fight with each other and so many reactions result from that fight. The difficulty is that the soul is entangled in this mock fight. Otherwise this world of fighting and misconception has no value. But the dust of spirit, a very infinitesimal part of the spiritual reality, is entangled in this world and concerned with this world of mock fighting. Without the spiritual energy within this world, nothing would remain. A magician's sleight of hand is all based on misconception. It is false. Still we are perplexed by his tactics. That is also true. A magician or hypnotist can show what is not real to be real, and yet while we are under his spell we cannot deny its reality.

Everything, including our own self, belongs to Krishna. But the difficulty arises when we see something other than Krishna. Separate interest. The consciousness of separate interest is the root of all evils. We are one with Krishna, but whenever the seed of separate interest sprouts, and we think we have some separate interest, that we are not included in the interest of Krishna, that is the root of such misconception.

*bhayam dvitiyabhinivesatah syad
isad apetasya viparyayo smrtih
tan-mayayato budha abhajat tam
bhaktyaikayesam guru-devatatma*

In this way, the scriptures have given a diagnosis of the disease or concoction of false conception. We are living in a fool's paradise. And the very beginning of material existence that we can trace is at the inception of a separate interest. The first deviation from advaya-jnana is a conception of separate interest.

Question: How can we know what is actually real?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Through faith. That is the developed state of sukrti or spiritual merit. When our faith is developed, it leads us to sadhu sanga, the association of saints. The agents of the divine world, who are in the plane of reality - the nirguna wave beyond this world of creation - come to establish some

connection with reality in our soul. That is the deepest element. The connection with saints produces faith, and faith can see reality.

There is a world which is only approachable by faith *sraddhamayo'yam loka*. Just as color is seen by the eyes and sound is perceived by the ear, that world can be perceived only by faith. Only faith can see and feel it. The Supreme Reality cannot be perceived with any other senses. Faith is the real function of the soul and that is awakened by the agents of Vaikuntha, the saints. By faith one's association with saints increases, and by this transaction the culture of reality takes place. Gradually this process makes us become fully conscious. At that time we realize that this world in which we are living is all transient and that our home is elsewhere. Our real home is located in the world of pure consciousness.

Question: Is that the same process by which the materialist sees this world as real?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: No. Realization of spiritual reality is independent of all material contamination or misconception. That injection into our soul is given by Vaikuntha, by the eternal associates of Visnu. Perceiving spiritual reality is the function of the soul, not of the material ego or senses. It is independent of that. When a patient is unconscious, the doctor gives him an injection. Then consciousness comes and after that he can cooperate with the doctor by describing his symptoms. But before one can cooperate with the doctor, the doctor does different things to help the unconscious patient. In the same way, when we are fully engrossed in our material engagement, the saints from the higher plane of reality act like doctors to inject some understanding of divinity into our consciousness. In this way they try to awaken our spiritual self-interest, our consciousness of the soul.

Dr. Thoudan Singh: Once Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja asked us to prove that matter comes from life, by using science. I didn't know how to start. How can we prove that matter comes from life?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: The definition of evolution given by Darwin is that life comes from the fossil. But we say just the opposite. Evolution from inside of consciousness is the cause of our seeing the different things of this world. The evolution is from within. Evolution is not from the outside, as we might

ordinarily think. This is the teaching of Vedanta. Reality does not develop from imperfection to perfection; it is only that a part of the perfection seems to be imperfect. To theorize that the imperfect is producing perfection is ludicrous.

It is far more reasonable and easy to conceive that a part of the perfection has somehow become imperfect. It is perceived by us to be imperfect. That is the natural and more reasonable conclusion. We have to accept something of what Darwin says but where does the fossil come from? And that the fossil can produce the infinite is a foolish idea.

The body is amazing the doctors with so many wonderful phenomena. They cannot fathom so many questions. How is it built? How are consciousness, intelligence, and genius centered in the brain? That wonderful thing which we find in the brain, the thought of the genius, is not produced by a material thing. The starting point must be the wonderful thing. We say that really exists - that wonderful thing, the source of all wonders.

Everything is full of wonder. If we analyze the atom, we will be in wonder. Only we impose limitations. But when we analyze the atomic parts of wood or stone, we will be in wonder. The infinite is everywhere. Perfection is everywhere. The trouble is that with our limited thinking we have produced a world of limits. But we who are captured by the "scientific" way of thinking are not ready to admit that. That is the puzzle. From the biggest to the smallest, from the lowest to the highest, everything is wonderful. But we won't admit that. We will go to the fossil and say that the fossil is producing everything. But what is that fossil?

Dr. Marchetti: But how can we prove to the scientists that matter comes from life? These are philosophical arguments. The scientists will say, "What is the utility of philosophical arguments?"

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: In the beginning of the electric generation, the famous scientist Michael Faraday gave a public demonstration of the power of electricity. In one experiment, Faraday generated electricity. With the current generated by his dynamo, he was able to move some pieces of paper. After watching the wave of current move some pieces of paper, a lady challenged him, "What is the utility of your electricity, Dr. Faraday?" And he said, "Madam, would you please tell me, what is the utility of a newborn babe?" Is death philosophical? Death is there

to frustrate all other things if you don't take shelter in philosophy. Philosophy only can face the greatest enemy, death. And death is not limited to a particular thing; it will include the whole world. The sun, the moon, the stars, this globe, and everything else will vanish in due course of time. The scientists themselves tell us so. If we want to live beyond the plane of death, philosophy will help us have an eternal life of eternal peace. Only philosophy can give us that.

What is the purpose of this world? That is known only to Him. The first verse of Bhagavatam states, He alone is fully aware of the purpose of His activity. He is the Absolute Autocrat, He doesn't have to explain Himself to anyone. Everything is for Him. Also, in some way He is for us.

aham bhakta paradhino hy asvatantra iva dvija
sadhur grasta-hrdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyah
Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.57

"I do not know anyone but My devotees. All the saints are my sweetheart, and I am also their sweetheart. They do not know anyone but Me and I also don't care to know anyone but them."

He is for the devotees and the devotees are for Him. That is, the Substance and the Potency, the Enjoyer and enjoyed, the Positive and negative, the Served and the servitor – both combined make the Whole. The Subject and the object.

No subject can exist without an object. Subject means the thinking thinker, and there must be something to be thought otherwise the subject cannot exist. There must be some thinker and then recognition of a particular thing.

Ignorance is not accidental, it is earned by our previous action – man is the architect of his own fortune. The bad weather I am meeting with at present has been earned by myself. Don't complain against the environment. Utilise it as best you can and try to see the Grace of the Absolute therein. The anomaly I am facing at this present time is the product of my own action, no-one else is to blame. Not only is that true; but from another viewpoint it can also be seen that the Grace of the Lord is always present everywhere – eager to help me – coming in the guise of an apparently unfavourable environment according to the vision of my present experience. That is the necessary medicine for my disease, the medicine to cure my madness. It is like medicine dispensed by the Lord. He is everywhere with

His sympathetic hand extended to us in the circumstances of most intense danger. To have this attitude is to have the key, the solution that solves our unfavourable circumstances, our unfavourable position.

The Lord is not vindictive, He does not want to punish us. Punishment has come only to teach us. The punishment is there but coming from the affectionate hand to teach us, to improve us, to help us. We have to see all dangers like that. So set yourself right – not others – and real peace you will find. And never try to enjoy the result of your actions. This is the key to a successful life, and happiness will flow from that. You will find the Infinite is your Friend.

Everything is a part and parcel of the Original, therefore God is manifested in everything. And it is not that we can sacrifice or negate everything and only God remains, otherwise why we are here? Our individuality and existence is real. So both sides must have some recognition. Harmony between them is truth proper. This is the conception of Mahaprabhu. There is polarity and also there is unity and harmony, and that is all-important. Dislocation is unhealthy. Proper adjustment is necessary. Maya (misconception) means dislocation. Provincial, local interests are clashing with each other as well as with the Absolute. But proper adjustment comes through achieving understanding of the Absolute. Such understanding brings true harmony.

४८

ब्रह्म पारमात्म्य लक्ष्मणाद्वयैक वाचनम्
 श्री व्रज स्वसिद्धं नन्द लील नन्द नन्दनम्
 श्री रस स्वरूप रास लील गोप सुन्दरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

48

brahma-pāramātmya-lakṣaṇādvayaika-vācanam
 śrī-vraja-svasiddha-nanda-līla-nanda-nandanam
 śrī-rasa-svarūpa-rāsa-līla-gopa-sundaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Referring to the verse brahmeti paramatmeti bhagavan iti sabdyate in the Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Chaitanya harmoniously accommodated Brahman realization (brahma-nirvana, the conception of the nondifferentiated aspect of reality which is the ultimate goal of the impersonalists), with Paramatma realization, the goal of the mystic perfectionists. The Lord adjusted these two truths by showing that they are included within, and surpassed by, the ultimate conception of the nondualistic Absolute Truth Sri Krishna (*bhagavan*), who is the primeval principle of reality. Revealing this axiomatic truth and explaining the confidential nature of the Supreme Lord's spiritual pastimes, Lord Chaitanya pointed out the divine nature of Krishna's holy abode of Vrindaban, which is eternally existing above the Vaikuntha plane, the realm of Lord Narayana.

*vaikunthaj janito vara madhu-puri tatrapī rasotsavad
 vridaranyam udara-pani-ramanat tatrapī govardhanah
 radha-kundam ihapi gokula-pateh premamritaplavanah
 kuryad asya virajato giri-tate sevam viveh na kah*

"Superior to the spiritual realm of Vaikuntha is Mathura, where Sri Krishna first appears. Superior to Mathura is the Vrindaban forest where Krishna enjoyed the rasa dance. Better still is Govardhana Hill, which was the site of even more confidential pastimes of love. But best of all is Radha kunda, which is situated at the foot of Govardhana Hill, and holds the supreme position because it is overflowed with the nectar of the highest kind of divine love. Who, acquainted with the science of devotion, will not aspire for the divine service of Srimati Radharani at Radha kunda?"

Sri Chaitanya revealed the glories of the pure loving service rendered unto Krishna the son of Nanda Maharaja in the parental relationship (*vatsalya rasa*). Then, Lord Chaitanya described the ultimate aspect of the Supreme Lord's personality to be Sri Gopijanavallabha Krishna, the beloved of the milkmaids of Vrindaban, whose divine figure is the unlimited reservoir of all the primary and secondary mellows tasted by pure devotees. Sri Gauranga also explained that the joyful and charming *rasa-lila* pastimes are an all-conscious reality, none other than the personal potency of Srimati Radhika. Such transcendental pastimes are found within the superexcellent and inconceivable spiritual world and are the highest conception of spiritual existence, auspiciousness and beauty. Lord Chaitanya said this is the supreme achievable object of the living entities. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The Full-fledged Conception of the Gayatri Mantra by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

*bhavadas tat savitur varenya-vihitam ksetra-jna sevyarthakam
bhargo vai vrsabhanu-jatma-vibhavaikaradhana sri puram
bhargo jyotir acintya lilana sudhaikaradhana sri puram
(bhargo dhama-taranga khelana sudhaikaradhana sri puram)
(bhargo dhama sada-nirasta kuhakam prajana-lila-puram)
devasyamrta-rupa-lila-rasadheraradha-dhih prerinah
(devasyamrta-rupa-lila purusasyaradha-dhih presinah)
(devasya dyuti-sundaraika-purusasyaradhyadhih presinah)
gayatri-muralista-kirtana-dhanam radha-padam dhimahi
(gayatri-gaditam mahaprabhu-matam radha-padam dhimahi)
(dhir aradhanam eva nanyad iti tad radha-padam dhimahi)*

Gayatri is the mantra which by singing we get salvation, not just freedom from the negative side, but self-determination;

mukti hitvanyatha rupam, svarupena vyavasthitih.

Says Srimad Bhagavatam, "Know the positive self, that is real mukti." To engage in positive function - that's our highest attainment, and that is service in devotion, not a void indifference!

First omkara, then Gayatri, then Veda, Vedanta-sutra, then Bhagavatam from Gayatri - the "Mother of the Vedas". Srimad-Bhagavatam being the commentary of Gayatri, then Krishna-conception in Vrndavana we must clearly see in the womb of Gayatri mantra.

Om is the seed within which is contained the whole conception.

Bhur is where we are, in the world of our perception.

Bhuvah is at the back of that - our mental acquisition, our *karmic* mentality of sensual predilection.

Svar means *buddhiloka*, the plane of fine decision, the choice of movement up or down - the faculty of reason. Bhur, Bhuvah, Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapar, Satya: The mundane world of seven planes, up to Satyaloka, where resides Lord Brahma, and those saints, the four Kumaras. These are the planes of life in the material negative side, as explained in *Bhagavatamrtam* by Sanatana Goswamipada. Then Viraja river - equipoised verge of negative side; then Brahmaloka - equipoised verge of positive world; Then the world of reality - dedication, loving service, the soul's nature proper in the Sivaloka residence. Then further to Vaikuntha, Ayodhya, Dvaraka, then Mathura and finally Vrndavana, Krishnaloka.

Tat Savitur means the sun - which illuminates all objects, and that is none but the soul - the observer, he's the subject. As it is in *Sri Gita*, sung by Sri Govinda; *ekah krtsnam lokam imam ravih ; soul - "observer."*

Varenyam - above the soul, higher than the subject, The Absolute Supreme Being - Supersoul, Supersubject. More subtle than the soul, and to be worshipped by him is **Bhargo** - the abode of the supersubjective plane, described in the *Bhagavatam* in the very first verse. The domain of Supreme Truth where all *maya* is dispersed. In its own pristine glory, it shows the highest goal, a higher powerful light which illuminates the soul:

Devasya - it's *His* potency, the Lord of sweet pastimes, Reality the Beautiful, to be worshipped at all times. That *Bhargo* has expanded from King Vrsabhanu's daughter, Embodiment of *Mahabhava* - none other than Sri Radha. All energy, responsibility to serve Lord Krishna is Her domain, the loving plane of service to

the centre. She knows how to serve Krishna, to please Him like no other, so if we want to serve Him, we must pray to get Her order!

Dhimahi - we are addressed: "Come and meditate." What sort of meditation? Culture, cultivate our veneration, worship, our service in devotion: Engagement in the positive, not abstract meditation. Not an idle, fleeting, mundane experiment, but a spiritual culture - cultivate our serving temperament.

Dhiyo Yo Nah Pracodayat - what is the effect? Capacity of cultivation - it will be increased. *dasa kare vetan, more deha prema-dhan-* the more you give, the more you get desire to carry on: the more service is increased, it's added to the treasure as interest, our willingness increases without measure. This is the inner meaning of Gayatri *mantra*.

४९

रादिहका विनोद मात्र तत्त्व लक्षहान्वयम्
 सादहु सना क्रिश्ह नाम सादहनैक निश्चयम्
 प्रेम सेवनैक मात्र सादह्य क्रिश्ह तत्परम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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rādhikā-vinoda-mātra-tattva-lakṣaṇānvayam
 sādhu-sanga-kṛṣṇa-nāma-sādhanaika-niścayam
 prema-sevanaika-mātra-sādhya-kṛṣṇa-tatparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanya discussed his joy-filled visions of Sri Krishna, reality the beautiful, in the company of devotees liberated from all worldly attachments. Lord Gauranga told his associates that all scriptural conclusions, as perfectly passed down from generation to generation by the exalted spiritual preceptors through the medium of sound, at last culminate in realization of Sri Radhavinode, the perfect embodiment of divine love. This realization of the Deity of divine love is the all-encompassing basis that provides a proper understanding of reality (*sambandha-jnana*). The means of attainment (*abhidheya*) by which someone may reach a proper understanding of the loving Lord Krishna is by chanting Krishna's holy names and discussing the qualities, pastimes and transcendental form of Sri Krishna in the association of pure devotees.

The ultimate goal of the perfected devotees inspired by madhura-rasa in the mood of parakiya-bhava, is to render service to Sri Sri Radhavinode following the method practiced by the milkmaids of Vrindaban, the land of spiritual gemstones where every step is dancing and the sound of the flute is the constant companion. The song of Sri Krishna's flute awakens unrestrained feelings of pure love and surrender and the flute song calls the milkmaids to arise and perform service to Lord Krishna, who is so very dear to Sri Radha, the Queen of the cowherd maidens of Vrindaban (*prayojana*). Again and again I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The Song of Krishna's Flute

by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

There is the *gayatri mantram* but what we are chanting is *mantra*: Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*. It is mentioned in the scriptures:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

This is not *mantram* but the *maha-mantra*. It is especially worth noting. The scriptures describe what we take at the time of second initiation as *gayatri mantra*. That is *mantram* — *gayatri mantram*.

At the time of first initiation, what we get from Guru is *maha-mantra*. We need to consciously differentiate between *mantra* and *mantram*. In Chaitanya Charitamrita Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami clearly states the difference: by Krishna *mantra* one will get liberation from material existence, but only by Krishna-*nam* will one enter the land of dedication and achieve service of the lotus feet of Krishna (*krsna-mantra haite habe samsara-mocana, krsna-nama haite pabe krsnera carana*).

With this in mind we can understand what is what. If we want to enter into the transcendental world, first we need the help of the *maha-mantra*, because the *maha-mantra* can rescue one from the very lowest level and take one to the very highest level. For *gayatri mantra* some qualification is necessary; there are rules and regulations, many obstacles etc. *Gayatri* is *mantram*, and *harinam* (the Holy Name of Krishna) is *maha-mantra*. The *harinama maha-mantra* is very appropriate for the age of Kali yuga. Every yuga has its own *maha-mantra*, and that is called, *taraka brahma nam* (liberating spiritual name).

Like the trumpet of an elephant, it is a sound so great that it captures the hearts and attention of everyone. But that sound has no material form — it is pure spiritual sound. And that divine sound descends into this world from the flute of Lord Krishna.

Some mornings I see how our temple is decorated with our Math logo [in the center is a lotus flower (disciple) sheltered in the water (guru) nourished beneath

the shining sun of OM (Krishna). At the base is the flute of Krishna with its divine song of liberation descending into this world.] I think how sweetly and intelligently Srila Guru Maharaja has described this in his explanation of Gayatri Mantra.

Gayatri means, "Sing and you will get liberation!" (*ganat trayate iti gayatri*). Such a very nice style! "Dance, sing, and you will get liberation!" This is *gayatri* — *ganat trayate*. No one anywhere, at any time, has explained the transcendental vibration form of the Lord in this way. No religion says, "Chant, dance and get liberation!"

And what is the form of that song? *Murali* means the flute of Krishna, the sound that comes out of the flute of Krishna (*muralista-kirtana-dhanam*). Krishna's flute is singing. Flutes are for singing, not for blasting, not for making violence. The sweet sound of Krishna's flute brings peace to the heart.

And what is the flute singing? It has some target. When we sing, we have some object in mind. We also employ rhythm and meter. The flute has a regulator and that meter is — the name of Radharani. No other sound is coming out from the flute, only, "Radhe, Radhe, Radhe, Radhe!" Only this sound is coming — in a variety of ways.

We can conceive something in this regard from studying the life and character of Raghunath Das Goswami. Every day Das Goswami is singing,

radhe vrindavana-vilasini radhe radhe
radhe kanu-mano mohini radhe radhe
radhe asta-sakhira siromani radhe radhe

In this song every verse concludes with, "Radhe Radhe!" Every day this is sung in the Radha Damodar Temple. When Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur first met Gaura Kishore Das Babaji, Babaji Maharaja was singing this song. And always singing this song, whether walking in the road or sitting in *bhajan*, he was always singing this song. This sound is the only song coming from the flute of Lord Krishna. The sound manifestation of its divine influence spreads over the entire transcendental and mundane worlds.

This understanding we get from the description of Rasa Lila in Srimad Bhagavatam. First Krishna calls all of the Gopis to assemble for Rasa Lila by playing his flute. It is *the* clarion call. And this call is the real property of all souls (*jivas*). We understand this through Bhaktivinode Thakur:

*jiv jago, jiv jago gauracanda bole
kota nidra jao maya-pisacira kole*

Is this *the* clarion call or what? We are sleeping on the lap of Maya in ignorance but the clarion call is coming, "Wake up!" The Upanishads say, *uttishata jagrata prapya varan nibodhata*, 'Wake up, arise and begin the search for Sri Krishna. Now is the time to get love for Krishna.' The Upanishads, Bhaktivinode Thakur, the song of Krishna's flute — the gist of that sound, its wealth, is realized in connection with the lotus feet (service) of Srimati Radharani (*Radha Dasyam*). Krishna is only attracted to his Divine Potency. She is serving Krishna wholeheartedly and very extensively with her associates. She is known as Radharani. And Krishna is always and only thinking of her.

The sound of Krishna's flute not only regulates *madhura rasa* but all *rasa*. In *madhura rasa* Radharani is the chief, but all other *rasas* are also maintained by *madhura rasa*. *Madhura rasa* is *adi rasa* the principal *rasa* from which all *rasa* springs. *Madhura rasa* maintains all variety of spiritual relationship: passive, active — servant, friend, parent — guardian (*shanta rasa, dasya rasa, sakhya rasa, vatsalya rasa*). Maintenance means preservation. Radharani's supreme sweet mood of service sustains the entire spiritual existence.

Gayatri-muralista-kirtana-dhanam. Generally we refer to the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* or any devotional song as *kirtan* or *sankirtan*. But there is a little difference between the two. What one does alone may be called *kirtan*. But *sankirtan* means when, in a gathering of devotees, their heart comes out, that kind of *kirtan* is called *sankirtan* (*bahubhir militva yat kirtanam tad eva sankirtanam*).

Here Guru Maharaja has specifically mentioned *kirtana dhanam*. *Kirtan* is not only recommended for everyone, but it is the wealth of our life, because through *kirtan* we get entrance into the Rasa Lila — divine play with Krishna, Radharani, the Vraja Gopis — playing, singing, dancing. And this is the wealth of liberated *jiva* souls.

Guru Maharaja says not only *kirtan* but *kirtana dhanam*. The flute is not a bamboo stick or something made out of metal. It is alive. This means it is a conscious living being (*cetana*). Everyone in the transcendental and material world has free will, this freedom Krishna has given to everyone. The body of the flute is a form of consciousness. He has desires and free will like any being, but he is using his freedom for this inconceivable service to Lord Krishna. The flute's ecstasy is in singing the song of the lotus feet of Radharani (*Radha Dasyam*).

*sakhi murali visala-cchidra-jalena purna
laghur atikathina tvam granthila nirasasi
tad api bhajasi svasvac cumbanananda-sandram
hari-kara-parirambham kena punyodayena*
— Vidagdha Madhava, Rupa Goswami

[Hey flute-friend, what sort of good things have you done that such a hard, dry piece of bamboo like you, with more faults (knots) than holes, enjoys being squeezed by Krishna's lotus hands and tastes an endless stream of nectar from his kiss?]

Rupa Goswami's Prabhu's *sloka* praises the flute.

The flute has its own life which is dedicated to this most desirable and palatable song (*istha kirtana dhanam*). More than that I cannot express in English. But I can see in the eyes. Cannot express — maybe. But it is true, what the flute is playing, that is written everywhere. He is playing the name of the Supreme Servitor of Lord Krishna. The Supreme Servitor Form of Lord Krishna is Srimati Radharani.

It is fully described in Garga Samhita. I have seen yesterday maybe — I am opening and getting. This is the mercy of Guru Maharaja. Standing in the *arati* and seeing the Math logo above the Deities, my brain starts working. Brain is material and matter cannot touch the transcendental but everything is possible by the grace of Gurudeva. So by Srila Guru Maharaja's grace I am very hopeful. The meaning of Gayatri as revealed by Srila Guru Maharaja is: Krishna's flute sings the song of the lotus feet of Radharani (*Radha Dasyam*).

The word *dhimahi* in Gayatri is very famous in Sanskrit literature. Two words are present most in *gayatri mantrams*: *dhimahi* and *pracodayat*. The concluding

word of the meditation is *pracodayat*. It's not that we will only meditate, but the *mantram* will pressure us to serve Radharani.

We need to know the spiritual regulations and injunctions (*codanam* — *praticodanam*). That scriptural advice is found in the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata etc. *Sruti* and *Smṛti*: Bhagavad Gita is *smṛti* and *sruti* is Vedanta, Upanishads etc. But here *codanam* means *prerana* (inspiration). What kind of inspiration? Forceful inspiration — inspiring forcefully. The *mantram's* nature is like that: to capture the *jiva* soul's mind through inspiration and forcefully engage one in the service of Radharani. This is the extraordinary meaning Srila Guru Maharaja has given of the *Gayatri Mantra*.

And I have found this sort of nectar in the Garga Samhita, maybe a thousand times. We should note that in Srimad Bhagavatam the most exalted, qualified, exponents of Vedic *mantram* were all present at Sukadev's meeting with Parikit Maharaja. Veda Vyas records their names in the Bhagavatam because each name also represents a different school of thought (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.9-10).

Even though they are the senior-most representatives of all schools of Vedic thought, Sukadev Goswami did not try to fully disclose the esoteric secrets of the Krishna conception (Goloka Vrindavan — *aprakṛta lila*). By inference he revealed the highest truth. But Sukadev Goswami did not expose the conception of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (*radha bhava dyuti suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa svarupam*).

Mahaprabhu came to give what was never given before (*anarpita-carim cirat karunayavatirnah kalau*). What was not given before in this material world, not only this material universe, but in the millions of universes in this material sky, nowhere was it given. Mahaprabhu Chaitanyadev came to give that (*kṛṣṇa prema pradayate*). And that can be found in the Srimad Bhagavatam. But Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur says clearly, if you search for evidence you are foolish, because although Srimad Bhagavatam may be the junior-most scripture, it contains the senior-most thought.

After Veda Vyas had revealed all the scriptures still he was unhappy. He was again initiated by Narada Goswami, mediated and then composed the Srimad Bhagavatam. So it is junior-most in terms of date of composition, but the senior-most beautiful theories of the highest reality are given in an organized way to the

souls of this world (*jiva cetana*). Srila Guru Maharaja used this expression, *jiva cetana*; it may be a material atmosphere, but the basis of the world is consciousness.

Still there is a little suspicion in the minds of pure hearted devotees, "If the purpose of the book is to reveal the devotion of Radharani (*kṛṣṇa prema*), then why is her name not mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam?" Mercifully, Srila Guru Maharaja has given this theory to us in his original *sloka*:

*yadamiya-mahima-sri bhagavatyam kathayam
pratipadam anubhutam apyalabdhahhideya
tadakhila-rasa-murteh syama-lilavalamvam
madhura-rasadhi-radha-padapadman prapadye*

In the Srimad Bhagavatam, everywhere, every *sloka*, every letter, is glorifying the holy name of Radharani. Her particular form may not be visible, but Krishna is always playing with whom? Radharani. Srimad Bhagavatam is the Play of the Sweet Absolute. Then it is impossible that Radharani's name will not be there. But Sukadev is hiding her behind a veil of inference. In India there is a marriage system. Married girls always keep their heads covered. When a senior honorable person comes they immediately cover their heads. This is also the style of Srimad Bhagavatam for concealing, yet revealing Radharani.

The Sweet Absolute's play in Goloka Vrindavan depends upon Radharani. Without Radharani's association, Krishna is nothing! Only she can fully exchange *rasa* with Krishna. Krishna is the emporium of all *rasas* (*akhila-rasamṛta-murtih*), but who can contain that infinite ocean of *rasa*? Who is the pot? The pot is Radharani. In that pot Krishna is keeping his wealth and tasting. Otherwise, all will be spoiled. So Krishna keeps all his wealth in the pot of Radharani and tastes her mood of devotion.

This is the explanation Srila Guru Maharaja has given of the Gayatri *mantra*. And no one has given anything like this in the conscious world — this material conscious world. No one has given an explanation like Guru Maharaja. In his final days we saw Guru Maharaja continually discovering new things. Actually, it is all within him, but he didn't have anyone to tell. Finally in his last life I asked, "Nowhere has anyone given such an explanation of Gayatri *mantra*, why are you giving? What all of the Acharyas are hiding, why are you exposing that?"

Within Gayatri *mantram*, within Rg *mantram* — Guru Maharaja revealed everything. I have taken six explanations. I chose from there — and four I have taken specifically. But it is especially my desire that I shall take this one: *dhir aradhanam eva nanyad iti tad radha-padam dhimahi*. *Buddhi* — *dhi*. *Buddhi* — where will go *buddhi*? There are two kinds of intelligence: one *para* and one *apara*. *Apara* intelligence is always serving the Lord. Then *dhir aradhanam eva nanyad iti*, without serving the Lord, no other conception exists. That is Guru Maharaja's *vakya*, meaning — explanation. But I have taken, *gayatri-gaditam mahaprabhu-matam*, where it is a little hidden (*radha-padam dhimahi*).

The original Rg Veda *mantram* is:

*om tad visnoh paramam padam sada pasyanti surayah
diviva caksur atatam visnor yat paramam padam*

It is called Rg *mantra*. But Srila Guru Maharaja has enhanced that Rg *mantra*:

*om tad visnoh paramam padam sruti matam muhyanti yat surayah
drastah caksur iva prasarita-maha-suryeva divyatatam
dhamna svena sada nirasta-kuhakam satya param sabditam
jyotih priti-tanum hiranya-purusam pasyanti tam surayah*

This line is especially significant: *jyotih priti-tanum hiranya-purusam*. Effulgence and love — heart and halo — has taken form as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This sort of revelation is Guru Maharaja's miracle!

So many pundits can understand the Sanskrit language but from within the Sanskrit, everyone cannot extract the gist of ecstasy. This is a fact. In the Upanishad it is said very clearly, *nayam atma bala-hinena labhyo, nayam atma pravacanena labhyo, na medhaya na bahuna srutena*. You know so many things — maybe. You may have so much intelligence (*medha*), but you will not understand. Without the grace of Nityananda Prabhu, without the grace of Baladev, you cannot understand anything.

But when Krishna in the form of guru will give this *mantram* to you and you will meditate with your own existence, then you must understand (*yam evaisa vrnute tena labhyas*). There is no doubt. But everywhere people are plagued by doubt and questions. Therefore everywhere there is so much difficulty. But he will

reveal himself to whom he chooses (*tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam*). It is as if we have no eyes! Like owls, who don't like to see the Sun. If we do not have a pair of eyes, how will we see? (*andhi bhuti caksu yara vishaya dhulite, kemone se para tattva paibe dekhite*). This is a Bengali expression. Which way will one see whose eyes are blinded by the dust of material conception?

Hare Krishna.

Here is the word *surayah*. Guru Maharaja used it only to honor the Vedas, Upanishads. But Guru Maharaja has not given the meaning of *surayah* as "the vision of the gods." *Surayah* means demigods. They are seeing, but demigods can never see that higher reality, *hiranya-purusah*, without the mercy of whom? *Jyotih priti-tanum's* mercy — without the mercy of Mahaprabhu. Without the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu, even the gods (*surayah*) also cannot see. This is a fact. Not that only I am saying this but Brahma himself agrees:

*jananta eva janantu
kim bahuktya na me prabho
manaso vapuso vaco
vaibhavam tava go-carah*

"Those who say, 'I know Krishna' — let them talk. But as far as I am concerned I cannot understand even a little bit about your glories. And for that I am misguided. It is not only bodily, mentally, or verbally, but my whole existence is blind without your mercy my Lord."

Brahma doubted Krishna's divinity and wanted to test his Omnipotence. He stole Krishna's cows and cowherd boyfriends while they took a lunch break from their cow herding pastimes (*gostha-lila*). Brahma kept them in a cave on his planet and after one year came back and was shocked, "Everything is normal! Sri Krishna's pastimes in Vrindavan are going on as ever without interruption."

He thought the cows and cowherd boys must have somehow escaped and returned to Vrindavan. So he checked back on his planet Brahmaloaka and saw they were still there sleeping under the influence of his illusion. He wanted to bewilder Krishna but instead he was now completely bewildered. He returned to Vrindavan and finally fell at the lotus feet of Krishna. He begged forgiveness for doubting his divinity and failing to realize his inconceivable potency.

Kneeling before Krishna, Brahma offered so many wonderful prayers, only to be sweetly dismissed with a mere affectionate glance from Krishna's lotus eyes.

Every day this type of divine substance does not come out. Today I am very fortunate — you are all very fortunate. And it came by simply seeing our Math logo. By his mercy I could give some explanation about Srila Guru Maharaja's Gayatri conception (*gayatri-muralista-kirtana-dhanam radha-padam dhimahi*).

The Hidden Meaning of Gayatri

— Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami

*bhvades tat savitur varenya-vihitam kshetra-jña sevyarthakam
bhargo vai vrsabhanu-jatma-vibhavaikaradhana sri-puram
(bhargo dhama-taranga-khelana-sudhaikaradhana sri-puram)
(bhargo dhama sada-nirasta-kuhakam prajñana-lila-puram)*

*devasyamrta-rupa-lila-rasadheraradha-dhih prerinah
(devasyamrta-rupa-lila-purusasyaradha-dhih presinah)
(devasya dyuti-sundaraika-purusasyaradhya-dhih presinah)*

*gayatri-muralista-kirtana-dhanam radha-padam dhimahi
(gayatri-gaditam mahaprabhu-matam radha-padam dhimahi)
(dhir aradhanam eva nanyad iti tad radha-padam dhimahi)*

५०

आत्म राम वाचनैक शहशितकार्त्त दर्शितम्
 रुद्र सम्बन्ध शब्द जात यद् यद् अर्त्त सम्बिहृतम्
 सर्व्व सर्व्व युक्त तत् तद् अर्त्त बहुरिदाकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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ātma-rāma-vācanaika-ṣaṣṭikārtha-darśitam
 rudra-samkhyā-śabda-jāta-yad-yad-artha-sambhṛtam
 sarvva-sarvva-yukta-tat-tad-artha-bhuridākaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Lord Chaitanya explained to Srila Sanatana Gosvami the famous atmarama Verse of Srimad Bhagavatam, giving sixty-one different meanings:

atmaramas ca munayo nirgrantha apy urukrame

kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim ittham-bhuta guno harih

"Even liberated souls fully satisfied in the self are irresistibly attracted by the superexcellent qualities of Krishna and surrender to him with unalloyed devotion."

The Lord separately combined each of the eleven words in that verse and established that each word is a treasurehouse of unlimited wealth supporting the conclusion of pure devotion.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The Atmarama Verse in Srimad Bhagavatam

by Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Lord Chaitanya explained to Sri Sanatan Goswami a very famous verse known as the Atmarama verse, which appears in Srimad-Bhagavatam as follows:

atmaramas ca munayo

nirgrantha apy urukrame

kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim

itthambhuta-guno harih

This verse indicates that those who are liberated souls and are fully self-satisfied will eventually become devotees of the Lord. This injunction is especially meant for the impersonalists, for the impersonalists have no information of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They try to remain satisfied with the impersonal Brahman, but Krishna is so attractive and so strong that He attracts their minds. This is the purport of this verse.

This verse had been previously explained to a great Vedantist known as Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya. After taking lessons from Lord Chaitanya, Sanatana Gosvami referred to this incident and prayed to the Lord to again explain the Atmarama verse. Kaviraja Gosvami, the author of Chaitanya-charitamrita, appreciating the Lord's explanation of the Atmarama verse, has also glorified Lord Chaitanya in his prayers. Falling flat at the feet of Lord Chaitanya, Sanatana Gosvami requested Him to explain the verse as He had formerly explained it to Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya.

Sanatana explained his eagerness to hear the same explanation in order that he might be enlightened. Being thus requested by Sanatana, the Lord replied: "I do not understand why Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya so much appreciated My explanation. As far as I am concerned, I don't even remember what I said to him. But because you are asking this of Me, I shall, with the help of your association, try to explain whatever I can remember." Thus the speaker and the audience are very intimately connected; the speaker is enlightened by the presence of the audience. The speaker, or master, can speak very nicely on transcendental subject matters before an understanding audience; therefore Lord Chaitanya said that He did not know how to explain the Sanskrit verse but that since He was in the association of Sanatana He would try to explain it.

The Lord then went on to point out that there are eleven items in the Atmarama verse: (1) atmaramah, (2) ca, (3) munayah, (4) nirgranthah, (5) api, (6) urukrame, (7) kurvanti, (8) ahaitukim, (9) bhaktim, (10) itthambhuta-gunah, (11) harih. The Lord then began to explain each and every one of these items. As far as the word atmarama is concerned, the Lord explained that the word atma is used to indicate: (1) the Supreme Absolute Truth, (2) the body, (3) the mind, (4) endeavor, (5) conviction, (6) intelligence, and (7) nature. The word rama means enjoyer; therefore anyone who takes pleasure in the cultivation of the knowledge of these seven items is known as atmarama. The Lord then explained about the different kinds of atmaramas, or transcendentalists. As for the word munayah, or muni,

those who are great thinkers are called munis. Sometimes the word muni is also applied to a person who is very grave. Great sages, great austere persons, great mystics and learned scholars are also called munis.

The next word, nirgrantha, indicates freedom from the bondage of illusion. Nirgrantha also means "One who has no connection with spiritual injunctions." Grantha means revealed scriptures, and nir is an affix which is used to mean "no connection," "constructing," and also "prohibiting." There are many instructions for spiritual realization, but persons who have no connection with such scriptural injunctions are also known as nirgrantha. There are many people who are foolish, low-born and misbehaved and who have no entrance into the revealed scriptures and injunctions, and therefore they are called nirgrantha. Because grantha is also used for the purpose of collecting riches, the word nirgrantha also indicates a poor man, bereft of all riches, who is attempting to collect riches.

The word urukrama is used to indicate a highly powerful person. The word krama is used to indicate the act of stepping, and the word urukrama indicates one who can step forward very far. The greatest step forward was taken by Lord Vamanadeva, who covered the whole universe in two steps. Thus the word urukrama indicates the Supreme Lord Vamanadeva. This extraordinary feature of Lord Vamanadeva is thus explained in Srimad-Bhagavatam (2.7.40).

*visnor nu virya-gananam katamo 'rhatiha
yah parthivany api kavir vimame rajamsi
caskambha yah sva-ramhasaskhalata tri-prstham
yasmad tri-samya-sadanad uru-kampayanam*

"No one can estimate the inconceivable potencies of Lord Visnu. Even if one can count the number of atomic combinations in this material world, he still cannot count the different energies of the Supreme Lord. As Vamanadeva, the Lord was so powerful that simply by stepping forward He covered the whole universe from Brahmaloaka down to Patalaloaka."

The inconceivable energies of the Lord are spread throughout the creation. He is all-pervading, and by His energy He sustains all planetary systems, yet through His pleasure potency He remains situated in His personal abode known as Goloka. By the expansion of His opulence, He is present in all the Vaikuntha planets as Narayana. By expanding His material energy, He creates innumerable

universes with innumerable planets within them. Thus no one can estimate the wonderful activities of the Supreme Lord, and therefore the Supreme Lord is known as urukrama, the wonderful actor. In the Visvaprakasa dictionary, the word krama is defined as "an expert display of energies," as well as "stepping forward very quickly."

The word kurvanti is used to mean "working for others." There is another word similar to this which is used when one's activities are done for one's own personal sense gratification, but the word kurvanti is used when activities are performed for the satisfaction of the Supreme. Thus in this verse the word can only indicate the rendering of transcendental service to the Lord.

The word hetu is used to indicate the reason or cause. Generally people are engaged in transcendental activities for three reasons: some want material happiness, some want mystic perfection and some want liberation from material bondage. As far as material enjoyment is concerned, there are so many varieties that no one can enumerate them. As far as perfections in mystic power are concerned, there are eighteen, and as far as types of liberation from material bondage are concerned, there are five. The state of being where all these varieties of enjoyment are conspicuous by their absence is called ahaituki. The ahaituki qualification is especially mentioned because by the ahaituki service of the Lord, one can achieve the favor of the Lord.

The word bhakti can be used in ten different ways. Out of these ten, there is sadhana-bhakti, or occupational devotional service. The other nine are called prema-bhakti, love of Godhead. Those who are situated in the neutral position attain perfection up to love of Godhead. Similarly, those who are situated in the relationship of master and servant attain love of Godhead to the stage of attachment. Those who are related in friendship attain love of God to the point of fraternity. Those who are in love with God as His parents are elevated to the point of transcendental emotion. But only those who are related with the Supreme in conjugal love can experience the highest of ecstasies. Thus there are different meanings for the word bhakti.

The Lord next explained the different meanings of itthambhuta-guna. Ittham bhuta indicates fully transcendental pleasure before which the transcendental pleasure known as brahmananda becomes like straw. In the Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya (14.36), a devotee says:

*tvat-saksat-karanahlada-
visuddhabdhisthitasya me
sukhani gopadayante
brahmany api jagad guro*

"My Lord, O Supreme, simply by understanding You or seeing You, the pleasure which we derive is so great that the pleasure of brahmananda becomes insignificant." In other words, the pleasure derived by understanding Krishna as He is—as the all-attractive reservoir of all pleasures and the reservoir of all pleasure-giving tastes with all transcendental qualifications—attracts one to become His devotee. By virtue of such attraction, one can give up fruitive activities and all endeavors for liberation and can even abandon the intense desire to achieve success in yoga mystic power. The attraction of Krishna is so intense that one can lose respect for all other means of self-realization and simply surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The Lord also explained the word *guna* in all its different meanings. *Guna* indicates the unlimited transcendental qualities of Krishna, primarily His sac-cid-ananda form. In His transcendental blissful knowledge and eternity, He is fully perfect, and His perfection is increased when He is controlled by the attention of His devotee. God is so kind and merciful that He can give Himself in exchange for the devotional service of the devotee. His transcendental qualities are such that the perfection of His beauty, His perfect reciprocation of love between Himself and His devotees, and the flavor of His transcendental qualities attract different kinds of transcendentalists and liberated souls. For example, He attracted the mind of Sanaka Kumara simply by the aroma emanating from the flowers offered to Him. The mind of Sukadeva Gosvami was attracted by the transcendental pastimes of Lord Krishna, and the minds of the damsels of Vrndavana were attracted by His personal beauty. Rukmini's attention was attracted by His bodily features and transcendental qualities, and the mind of the goddess of fortune was attracted by His flute playing and other transcendental features. Lord Krishna attracts the minds of all young girls and elderly ladies by His childlike activities. He also attracts the minds of His friends by His friendly activities. When He appeared in Vrndavana, He even attracted the birds, beasts, trees and plants. Indeed, everyone became attracted in love and affection for Krishna.

The word *hari* has different meanings, of which two are foremost. Hari means that He takes away all inauspicious things from the devotee's life and that He attracts the mind of the devotee by awarding him transcendental love of Godhead. Krishna is so attractive that anyone who can remember Him in some way or another becomes freed from the four kinds of material miseries. The Lord gives special attention to His devotee and banishes the devotee's various sinful activities, which are stumbling blocks for the advancement of devotional service. This is called routing the influence of ignorance. Simply by hearing about Him, one develops love for Him. That is the gift of the Lord. On one side He takes away inauspicious things, and on the other side He awards the most auspicious things. That is the meaning of hari. When a person is developed in love of Godhead, his body, mind and everything else are attracted by the transcendental qualities of the Lord. Such is the power of Krishna's merciful activities and transcendental qualities. He is so attractive that out of transcendental attachment, a devotee will abandon all four principles of spiritual life-religiosity, economic development, regulation of sense gratification and salvation.

The words *api* and *ca* are adverbs and can be used for virtually any purpose. The word *ca*, or "and," can render seven different readings to the whole construction.

The Lord thus established the import of the eleven words in the *Atmarama* verse, and then He began to explain the import of each item as follows. The word *brahman* indicates the greatest in all respects. The Lord is the greatest in all opulences. No one can excel Him in wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge and renunciation. Thus the word *brahman* indicates the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna. In the *Visnu Purana* (1.12.57) the word *brahman* is given to indicate the greatest of all; the Supreme Lord is the greatest, and there is no limit to His expanding as the greatest. One may conceive of Brahman's greatness, yet this greatness grows in such a way that no one can estimate how great He actually is.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is realized in three aspects, but they are all one and the same. The Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality, Krishna, is everlasting. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (2.9.33) it is said that He exists before the manifestation of this cosmic world, that He exists during its continuance, and that He continues to exist after its annihilation. Therefore He is the soul of everything great. He is all-pervading and all-witnessing, and He is the supreme form of everything.

There are three different kinds of transcendental processes mentioned in Vedic literature by which one can understand and achieve that supreme perfection of the Absolute Truth. They are called the process of knowledge, the process of mystic yoga, and the process of devotional service. The followers of these three processes realize the Absolute Truth in three different aspects. Those who follow the process of knowledge realize Him as impersonal Brahman; those who follow the process of yoga realize Him as the localized Supersoul; and those who follow the process of devotional service realize Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. In other words, although the word Brahman indicates Krishna and nothing else, still, according to the process that is followed, the Lord is realized in three different aspects.

As far as devotional service is concerned, there are two divisions. In the beginning there is vidhi-bhakti, or devotional service with regulative principles. In the higher stage there is raga-bhakti, or devotional service in pure love.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Absolute Truth, but He is manifested by the expansions of His different energies also. Those who follow the regulative principles of devotional service ultimately attain the Vaikuntha planets in the spiritual world, but one who follows the principles of love in devotional service attains to the supreme abode, the highest planet in the spiritual world known as Krishnaloka or Goloka Vṛndavana.

Transcendentalists can also be divided into three categories. The word akama refers to one who does not have any material desires. Moksa-kama refers to one who seeks liberation from material miseries, and sarva-kama refers to one who has the material desire to enjoy. The most intelligent transcendentalist gives up all other processes and engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord, even though he may have many desires. It is not by any kind of transcendental activity—neither fruitive action, nor the cultivation of knowledge, nor cultivation of mystic yoga—that a person can achieve the highest perfection without adding a tinge of devotional service. But for devotional service, all other transcendental processes are just like nipples on the neck of a goat. The nipples on a goat's neck may be squeezed, but they do not supply milk. If one is to derive actual perfection from his process, he must take to the devotional service of Krishna. In Bhagavad-gita it is stated:-

*catur-vidha bhajante mam
janah suktino 'riuna
arto jijnasur artharthi
jnani ca bharatarsabha*

"O best among the Bharatas [Arjuna], four kinds of pious men render devotional service unto Me-the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute." (Bg. 7.16)

When these four types of people amass righteous activities, they come to the devotional service of the Lord. Out of these four, those who are distressed and those who desire wealth are called devotees with desires, whereas the other two, the inquisitive and the searcher for wisdom, are seekers of liberation. Because they worship Krishna, they are all considered to be very fortunate. In due course of time, if they give up all desires and become pure devotees of the Supreme Lord, they can be considered most fortunate. Such fortunate beginners can develop only in the association of pure devotees of Lord Krishna. When one associates with pure devotees, he becomes a pure devotee himself. This is confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.10.11):

*sat-sangan mukta-duhsango
hatum noisahate budhah
kirtyamanam yaso yasya
sakrd akarnya rocanam*

"A person who is actually intelligent is able-by association of pure devotees-to hear about Lord Krishna and His activities." These activities are so attractive that when one hears of them, he does not give up his association with the Lord. But for the association of pure devotees, all other association is kaitava, or cheating. This is confirmed in the First Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam wherein it is stated that all cheating processes which obstruct transcendental realization are to be thrown off. By Srimad-Bhagavatam one can understand reality as it is, and such understanding helps one transcend the three kinds of material miseries. Srimad-Bhagavatam is compiled by the greatest sage, Vyasadeva, and it is a work coming out of his mature experience. By understanding Srimad-Bhagavatam and rendering devotional service, one can immediately capture the Supreme Lord within his heart.

Lord Chaitanya then explained that the word *projjhita* means "desire for liberation." One great commentator explained that desire for liberation is the most obstructive stumbling block on the path of God realization. Somehow or other, if one comes to Krishna and begins to hear about Him, Krishna is so kind that He awards him His lotus feet as a center. Having such a focal point, a devotee or transcendentalist forgets everything and engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord. When one comes to the Lord in devotional service, or in full Krishna consciousness, the reward is the Supreme Himself. Once engaged for the Supreme, one no longer asks for anything, as do the distressed man and he who desires material possessions. The method of devotional service, the service itself, association of pure devotees and the causeless mercy of the Lord all act so wonderfully that one can give up all activities and become absorbed in Krishna, even if he is distressed, in want of material possessions, inquisitive or is actually a wise man cultivating knowledge.

In summary, Krishna is the meaning behind all the words in the *Atmarama* verse. Up to this point Lord Chaitanya spoke only of the introduction to the *Atmarama* verse. Next He explains its real position.

In the cultivation of knowledge there are two kinds of transcendentalists. One of them worships the impersonal Brahman, and the other desires liberation. Since monists worship the impersonal feature of Brahman, they are therefore called worshipers of Brahman. These Brahman worshipers are further divided into three categories: the neophyte, one who is absorbed in Brahman realization, and one who has actually realized himself as Brahman. If devotional service is added, the knower of Brahman can then become liberated; otherwise there is no possibility of liberation. Anyone who is fully engaged in devotional service in Krishna consciousness is understood to be already realized in Brahman. Devotional service is so strong that one is attracted to Krishna even from the platform of Brahman worship. The Lord awards the devotee the perfection of a spiritual body, and he eternally engages in the transcendental service of Krishna. It is when the devotee understands and becomes attracted by Krishna's transcendental qualities that he wholeheartedly engages in devotional service. For instance, the four Kumaras and Sukadeva Gosvami were liberated from the beginning, yet in their later life they became attracted to the pastimes of Krishna and became devotees. Sanaka Kumara was attracted by the aroma of the flowers offered to Krishna, and the other Kumaras were attracted by the transcendental qualities of the Lord and thus engaged in His devotional service. The nine mystics mentioned

in the Eleventh Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam are understood to have been transcendentalists from birth by virtue of hearing of the transcendental qualities of Krishna from Brahma, Lord Siva and Narada.

Sometimes one becomes attracted to Krishna and His transcendental qualities simply by looking upon the beautiful features of His transcendental body, in which case one abandons the desire for liberation and engages in His devotional service. The devotee regrets his loss of time in the so-called cultivation of knowledge and becomes a pure devotee of the Lord.

There are two kinds of liberated souls having material bodies: the soul liberated by devotional service and the soul liberated by the cultivation of knowledge. The liberated soul in devotional service, attracted by the transcendental qualities of Krishna, becomes more and more elevated, whereas those who engage in dry speculation and simply cultivate knowledge without devotion fall due to their many offenses. This is confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.2.32) where it is stated:

*ye 'nye 'ravinaaksa vimukta-maninas
tvayy astabhavad avisuddha-buddhayah
aruhy krcchrena param padam tatah
patanty adho 'nadrit-a-yusmad-anghrayah*

"O Lord, the intelligence of those who think themselves liberated but who have no devotion is not pure. Even though they rise to the highest point of liberation by dint of severe penances and austerity, they are sure to fall down again into this material existence, for they do not take shelter at Your lotus feet." This is also confirmed in Bhagavad-gita:

*brahma-bhuta prasanna
na socati na kanksati
samah sarvesu bhutesu
mad-bhaktim labhate param*

"One who is transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman. He never laments nor desires to have anything; he is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state, he attains pure devotional service unto Me." (Bg. 18.54)

Thus one who is actually situated in Brahman realization has no reason to lament or desire. He is equal to everyone and is thus eligible for devotional service. This was also accepted by Bilvamangala Thakura, who, in his later life, lamented: "I was situated as a monist in order to become one with the Supreme, but somehow or other I contacted a naughty boy and became His eternal servitor." In other words, those who attain self-realization by the execution of devotional service attain a transcendental body, and, being attracted to the transcendental qualities of Krishna, engage fully in pure devotional service.

Anyone who is not attracted to Krishna is understood to be still under the spell of the illusory energy (maya), but one who is attempting to be liberated by the process of devotional service is actually liberated from the spell of maya. In the Eleventh Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam there are many instances recorded of devotees who became liberated in this life simply by engaging in devotional service.

५१

श्री सनातनानु रूप जीव सम्प्रदायकम्
 लुप्त तीर्त्त शुद्धह भक्ति शास्त्र सुप्रचारकम्
 नील शैल नात्त पीत्त नैज कार्य्य सौकरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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śrī sanātanānu-rūpa-jīva-sampradāyakam
 lupṭa-tīrtha-śuddha-bhakti-śāstra-supracārakam
 nīla-śaila-nātha-pīṭha-naija-kāryya-saukaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Lord Gaurasundara revealed his disciplic succession by inspiring Srila Sanatana Gosvami, his younger brother Srila Rupa Gosvami, and their nephew Srila Jiva Gosvami, to teach the conclusions of pure devotion (*suddha-bhakti*). The Lord told them to excavate the lost places of pilgrimage, to compose devotional literature explaining the proper methods of pure spiritual practice (*sadhana-bhakti*), and to teach about the path of spontaneous devotion (*raga-marga*). Lord Gauranga also carefully revealed his worshipable personality to the servitors of Sri Jagannatha Deva, the universal Lord of Purusottama Kshetra.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

५२

त्याग बाह्य ब्बोग बुद्दिह तीव्र दन्द निन्दनम्
 राय शुद्ध क्रिश्ण काम सेवनाब्धि नन्दनम्
 राय राग सेवनोक्त ब्बाग्य कोति दुश्करम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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tyāga-bāhya-bhoga-buddhi-tīvra-daṇḍa-nindanam
 rāya-śuddha-kṛṣṇa-kāma-sevanābhi-nandanam
 rāya-rāga-sevanokta-bhāgya-kōti-duṣkaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumī gaura-sundaram

Lord Chaitanya strongly condemned those men who externally wear the dress of a renunciate but who secretly harbor lustful desires in their heart. When Sri Chaitanya was told that Ramananda Raya was teaching young girls a form of dance for the pleasure of Lord Jagannatha, Sri Chaitanya praised Ramananda Raya's mood of pure devotional service. Considering Ramananda's service to be on the platform of spontaneous devotion (*raga-marga*), the Lord proclaimed that such a level of selfless service was a great fortune attainable only after millions of lifetimes of devotional service.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The Highest Conception of Conduct by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

One day, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura was chanting the Lord's names and wandering in the sky, at his sweet will. Suddenly he found that he was just near Yamalaya where Yama, the lord of death, holds court for judging the sinners of this world. He also found there Brahma, Narada, Siva, and others, discussing with Yamaraja the meaning of two slokas spoken by Sri Krishna in Bhagavad-gita (9.30,31); but they could not solve the problem of discerning the proper meaning of the slokas.

*api cet suduracaro, bhajate mam ananya-bhak
 sadhur eva sa mantavyah, samyag vyavasito hi sah*

"Externally, a person may be seen to commit many sins, but if he is exclusively given to My devotion, he should be considered most pure - a saint. Whatever he does, he does cent-per-cent rightly."

*ksipram bhavati dharmatma, sasvac chantim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijanihi, na me bhaktah pranasyati*

"Very soon, he will become religious in his behavior, and he will be seen to acquire real peace in his life. O son of Kunti, confidently declare to the public that my devotee never meets ruination."

But one who is engaged in the Lord's exclusive devotion, ananya-bhajana, has been defined by the Lord in His own words, sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja: "My exclusive devotee is he who gives up all phases of duties (sarva-dharman) and surrenders to My feet, accepting only his duty to Me." How, then, having already surpassed all phases of duties and surrendered to the Lord, can that exclusive devotee (ananya-bhak) further be seen to become a 'dutiful' or an externally 'pious man' (ksipram bhavati dharmatma)? This is an anomaly.

Yamaraja, Brahma, Narada, etc., discussed this point, but could not arrive at any solution. How can one become "righteous in the near future" when he has already abandoned all kinds of duties, either righteous or unrighteous, in order to exclusively surrender to the feet of the Supreme Lord? Finding no solution, they sent for Srila Bhaktivi-noda Thakura who, they noticed, was moving in the sky and taking the name of the Lord: "He is a pure devotee - and not an ordinary devotee - he has deep knowledge of the scriptures, so let him come and explain these verses of Bhagavad-gita."

And so, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura was invited, and he went there. He gave the meaning. Api cet sudura-caro, bhajate mam ananya-bhak - despite his outer practices, the exclusive devotee (ananya-bhak) is to be accepted (mantavyah) as a cent-per-cent saint (sadhu). Therefore, the conclusion is that he who can realize this, he who declares that an exclusive devotee of Krishna, regardless of his outer practices, is cent-per-cent saintly - he will soon become dharmatma, virtuous and religious. His statement and conclusion is cent-per-cent correct, and his conduct will soon become very pure and he, too, will have the chance of accepting the path towards eternal truth.

"So Arjuna, you take advantage of this and boldly declare to the public that My devotee who gives himself wholly unto Me can never come to ruination. Even if he may be seen to be outwardly doing something wrong - he will be saved. His successful life is assured. By this declaration, you will get the bene-fit of becoming righteous and have the chance of attaining eternal spiritual peace. Whoever can understand this and has the courage to declare that My exclusive devotee is never subject to ruination - he, in turn, gets his chance to come to this path of exclusive devotion, and he will attain eternal peace."

He will attain everything because he has the proper appreciation for exclusive devotion. Everything is for the Lord, and not for any other part. In the Absolute, every-thing is 'for itself.' 'The Absolute is for itself.' Whether we obey or disobey the laws of provincial or separate interest, we must without fail obey the rule that everything is for Him. This is the main rule, and all others are subsidiary. We may or may not carry on our duties, but we must carry on our duty towards the center; this is the all-important factor in every case. Thus, one who can appreciate this and boldly assert it to the public must have substantial appreciation for this conception, and he is sure to survive and improve his future condition very soon. "He will attain the path of eternal peace, and that is the service of Myself, Krishna." This is the underlying meaning.

The highest quality in every part of the whole is that everyone must be dedicated towards the center, even crossing his dutifulness in respect to any other environmental position. And one who can feel, appreciate, and assert this - he will also soon achieve such a position. His inner heart can appreciate, and that is something of a realization on that path; it will very soon take effect, and the public will see, "Oh, he is also entering this path of ananya-bhajana, the exclusive adherence to the call of the Absolute Center, and that is all-in-all."

"Dharma means morals, duties, including duties to father, mother, country, society, humanity; etc. But if one neglects all these and keeps a straight relationship towards Me, he will be considered free of any fault. He is in the line of sarva-dharman parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja. He is doing right, and one who can simply appreciate this will also very soon be converted to the same class." This is the whole purport.

In the standard or most general interpretation, the beginner in devotional service may have so many bad tendencies in his behavior, but when he matures these

must disappear. Nonetheless, undesirable behavior may sometimes be seen to persist, at least externally.

The more we are particular about the conduct of others, the more we lose our own time and energy. Instead of benefiting us, such a practice is reactionary. If I try to find fault with anyone, especially a devotee, the fault will come back to me. By chewing the poison in his body, that poison will come to me. Avoid such association. Try to find the good in others - that will help you.

There was a system in our Math at the time of our Guru Maharaja: he ordered one devotee to praise another - especially one that the devotee disliked. Thus, the devotee would be forced to find the goodness in the other devotee who he didn't particularly like, and thereby be benefited. Eliminating what was bad in his conception of the other person, he was to search for what good he could find, and thereby be benefited.

There need be no culture with any bad thing, any-where, especially in the devotees. Krishna has taken charge of His surrendered souls (ananya-bhak). Thus, whatever good or bad may be present in them is His responsibility. Any badness or evil in a devotee may -disappear at any time by His will, otherwise Krishna may have that tendency continue in order to serve some purpose of His. We must have this vision. We must not dare to criticize those who are directly under the charge of Krishna, or we shall accrue great difficulty. We should try to find the good in them, for that will help us a great deal. This is not a theoretical matter, but a most practical consideration.

Srila Rupa Goswami has given the example that the sacred Ganges water may externally appear to be filthy, but that outward filthiness of mud, bubbles and foam cannot change the purifying capacity of the Ganges water; similarly, the devotee himself, the pure soul or atma, is the purifying agent - the purest and most normal factor in the world. Whatever may be externally seen in his character is like the mud, bubbles and foam that is found in the Ganges water. The purifying capacity of the Ganges water is separate, and cannot be disturbed by any foam or dirt mixed with the water. The spiritual capacity does not depend in any way on the apparent material capacity. A Vaisnava may sometimes be seen to be a little greedy, a little angry; or physically he may be blind or deaf or lame - but the saintly character of the Vaisnava is independent of the mental or physical characteristics.

During Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's tour of South India, there was the case of Vasudeva-vipra, at Kurmaksetra. He was a leper, but at the same time he was a great devotee. His physical behavior was also uniquely exemplary: if any worms fell from his open sores to the ground, he would pick them up and replace them in the sores so the worms would not die. He was a thorough devotee. Mahaprabhu embraced him, and by the touch of His embrace, the leprosy disappeared.

Also, Srila Sanatana Goswami contracted sores all over his body due to the contact of bad water in the jungle, when he was return-ing from Vrndavana to Puri. Mahaprabhu used to welcome him by embrac-ing him, but Sanatana would try to withdraw. He object-ed, "Don't touch me! This is the body of a sinful man." The sores were oozing and emitting a bad odor, but Mahaprabhu embraced him forcibly. Sanatana had de-cided, "I shall either leave this place or I shall invite death by falling under the wheel of the cart of Lord Jagannatha." But as the Lord in the heart of all, Maha-prabhu knew Sanatana's mind. He chastised him, and embraced him, forcibly. All the sores disappeared, and Sanatana's body immediately became like gold.

Mahaprabhu said, "Sanatana, you are a Vaisnava. Your body is not defective. Aprakṛta- deha tomara 'prakṛta' kabhu naya. Krishna is testing Me. I am a sannyasi, and He is examining whether there is any partiality in My deal-ings with a Vaisnava simply because of his externally having so many sores. He is examining whether I will shrink from the association of such a Vaisnava and cast him aside. But your body is already pure, and only for the purpose of testing the public, Krishna has created this; and if I cannot see this, I will have failed His test and will have been deceived by Krishna. It is a mere show, it is nothing; your body is pure because you are a Vaisnava, a devotee of Krishna. This impurity is only an appearance in order to serve Krishna's divine purpose. Wherever there is Vaisnavata, true saintly devotedness, there can never be any contamination. Only to test my devotion has Krishna sent you to Me in this condition." So Mahaprabhu embraced him and demonstrated that he was absolutely pure.

Whether externally pure or impure, the whole prin-ciple is that our exclusive devotion for Krishna is the only necessity. In the ordinary sense, the Gopis are also sin-ners. They crossed the laws of society and the sastras, so they are 'sinners.' But they hold the highest position of purity by their exclusive devotedness to Krishna and no other. They cannot help but to serve Krishna cent-

per-cent, even at the risk of crossing the entire code of morality. They are considered to be the highest devotional ideal.

But that sort of devotion is not so cheap that every-one will go on with their activities in this world, taking advantage of such ideals. That won't do. The real measure of devotion must be there, not that anyone may do anything passing in the name of pure devotion, like the prakṛta-sahajiyas. That can't be allowed.

५३

श्री प्रयाग ब्रह्म वल्लभैक निश्चल सेवनम्
नील शैल ब्रह्म दत्त राग मार्ग रादहनम्
श्री गदाधरार्पितादिकार मन्त्र मादुहुरम्
प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

53

śrī-prayāga-bhaṭṭa-vallabhaika-niṣṭha-sevanam
nīla-śaila-bhaṭṭa-datta-rāga-mārga-rādhanaṁ
śrī gadādharaṛpitādhikāra-mantra-mādhuram
prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Vallabha Bhatta, the famous spiritual preceptor of the Vishnusvami disciplic succession (*suddhadvaita*), once personally served Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu with resolute devotion at his house in sacred Prayag. Later, at Jagannatha Puri, Sri Chaitanya allowed Vallabha Bhatta to enter into the mood of service for youthful Krishna (*madhura rasa*), arranging for Vallabha Bhatta to learn appropriate mantras under the guidance of Sri Gadadhara Pandit.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Lives of the Saints

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

Although sometimes we may judge Vaisnavas according to their different activities, we are not always correct, because a devotee is chosen for a particular service by the Lord, and whatever the Lord wants to do through him is done, by

His will. This is the underlying principle: it is His selection. Sometimes the selection comes to A, sometimes to B, and sometimes to C. We are all at the disposal of the Lord's infinite will, and according to His sweet will, according to how Krishna wants to utilize us, our activities will be successful. That is the absolute consideration. We cannot fail to connect success with the medium; there is also some value in that, but we must consider that Krishna is there in the background. We must always understand that the divine will, the highest will, is working through us. So, we should not be extreme in judging a devotee according to external considerations.

Gaura Kisor Das Babaji Maharaja did not preach, but his disciple, our spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada, preached with great magnitude. Srila Lokanatha Goswami did not preach at all, but we find that the preaching of his only disciple, Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura, was most extensive. So, a Vaisnava should not be judged only by the amount of work that he shows outwardly. His success is at the disposal of the divine will. Krishna awards service to a particular person according to His own choice, and enables that person to carry out that service. There are many examples of this.

Srila Nityananda Prabhu preached throughout the length and breadth of Bengal with great force, but Srila Gadadhara Pandita, although apparently not doing any tangible service in the *lila* of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, is said to be Radharani's *bhava*, transcendental sentiments, incarnate. And Gadadhara Pandita's affinity for Mahaprabhu exceeds that of all others.

So, we should not judge the position of a Vaisnava by the magnitude of his external activities alone. Of course, we cannot ignore the service rendered by a devotee. That is a noble thing, that is a great thing, but ultimately the key is in the hand of the Lord (*ekala isvara kṛṣṇa ara saba bhṛtya*).

Krishna is at the root of everything, and whatever he wills is successful. Krishna wants to dance in a particular way with a particular servitor, and he successfully dances according to His own sweet will. Krishna is the wire-puller, the controller. The key is in His hand. He controls both universal and specific dealings. By understanding this, we can save ourselves from *pratistha*, or false prestige, the thirst after name and fame. If we are fully conscious of the fact that everything is in the Lord's hands, then we cannot feel any pride.

So to teach us that it is not very easy to recognize a real Vaisnava by his external dress or manners alone, Gadadhara Pandita apparently misunderstood the position of Pundarika Vidyanidhi, an exalted associate of the Lord.

Gadadhara Pandita was taken by Mukunda Datta to see Pundarika Vidyanidhi. Mukunda Datta came from the same village as Pundarika. Mukunda knew him, and so he asked Gadadhara Pandita, "Would you like to see a real Vaisnava?" Gadadhara Pandita told him, "Yes, I am always eager to have the darsan of a real Vaisnava. Then Gadadhara Pandita followed Mukunda Datta to the quarters of Pundarika Vidyanidhi, and he was dumbfounded by what he saw. "What is this?" He thought. "Here is an aristocrat with curled, scented hairs, and a stylish, princely dress, smoking a pipe decorated with a golden thread and the whole room is filled with a sweet scent. He is a Vaisnava?"

Mukunda Datta could understand Gadadhara's heart, and began to sing a verse from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (3.2.23):

*aho baki yam stana-kala-kutam
jighamsayapayayad apy asadhvi
lebhe gatim dhatry-ucitam tato 'nyam
kam va dayalum saranam vrajema*

"Oh, how amazing it is! The sister of Bakasura (Putana), desiring to kill Sri Krishna, smeared poison on her breasts and forced Krishna to drink their milk. Even so, Lord Krishna accepted her as His mother, and so she reached the destination suitable for Krishna's mother. Of whom should I take shelter but the most merciful Krishna?"

Upon hearing this, Pundarlka Vidyanidhi became very serious. His movements stopped, and then some shivering was apparent in his body. The whole atmosphere was changed. He began to throw his hands and feet left and right. He cast his smoking pipe aside and began to roll on his bed, tearing off his silk clothing and the silk sheets, and pulling out his beautifully curled and decorated hair. He began to cry, "Of whom should I take shelter but the most magnanimous Lord? Where should I take refuge without such a Lord?" With this on his lips, he was rolling on the floor in ecstasy.

After a long time, he gradually subsided, and Gadadhara thought to himself, "What did I think about this great personality? He has so much love for Krishna

within. Although externally he appears as an ordinary man, a slave of luxury, internally he is a great devotee. What intense love he has for Krishna!" Then he thought, "I have committed Vaisnava *aparadha*, an offense to a great devotee. How can I free myself? I thought ill of him. What is the remedy for that offense?" So, he thought to himself, and then told Mukunda, "I have committed an offense against this great mahatma . How can I get out of that? I am thinking that generally those who come to this devotional line have to formally accept some preceptor, but I have not yet taken initiation from any Vaisnava. If I take initiation from him, he will forgive me and my offenses. He won't take any offense from me if I surrender unto his holy feet. Then only can I get release from this crime. But I have to consult my master Gauranga Mahaprabhu. So, he went to consult with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Sometime before this, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was seen calling the name of Pundarika and crying, "Pundarika, my father! Pundarika! Where are you?" In this way, he was suddenly crying. Ordinary people could not understand. They began to ask, 'Who is that Pundarika? For whom is the Lord wailing so much? Why is Nimai Pandita wailing 'Pundarika! Pundarika!'?"

Within a few days, Pundarika came from another village to his Navadvipa house. Mukunda Datta was his co-villager, so he knew Pundarika. When the devotees inquired, "Who is this Pundarika?" Mukunda Datta answered, "Pundarika has got a small estate, he is a well-to do, married man." So, Gadadhara Pandita asked Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu about Pundarika Vidyanidhi, saying, "I have committed an offense against the great Vaisnava, Pundarika Vidyanidhi, so for my own spiritual good, I feel the necessity to take initiation from him. But without consulting you, and getting your consent, I can't do anything. I put it before you. What should I do?

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu welcomed the idea, saying, "Yes, this is very good. You must accept him as your guru." It is said by authoritative sources that Pundarika Vidyanidhi was the father of Radharani, that he was the incarnation of Vrsabhanu Maharaja. So, Gadadhara Pandita took initiation from Pundanka Vidyanidhi. In this way, we should not be extreme in judging a devotee only from his external activities.

५४

श्री स्वरूप राय सना गाम्भीरान्त्य लीलनम्
 द्वादशाब्द वह्नि गर्भ विप्रलम्ब शीलनम्
 रादिहकादिहस्तदह ब्हाव कान्ति किशह कुन्जरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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śrī-svarūpa-rāya-sanga-gāmbhirāntya-līlanam
 dvādaśābda-vahni-garbha-vipralambha-śīlanam
 rādhikādhirūḍha-bhāva-kānti-kṛṣṇa-kuñjaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Diving deep into the reality of his own beauty and sweetness, Lord Govinda stole the mood of Radharani and, garbing himself in Her brilliant luster, He appeared as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. For the last twelve years of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's manifest pastimes He was deeply absorbed in union and separation. He shared his heart's innermost feelings with his most confidential devotees such as Swarup Damodar and Ramananda Raya:

bahire visajvala haya, antare anandamaya

"The wonderful characteristic of divine love of Krishna is that although externally it works like fiery lava, internally it is like sweet nectar filling the heart with the greatest joy."

Volcanic eruptions of ecstasy flowed from the heart of Sri Gauranga in the agony of Sri Radha's feelings of separation from Krishna. This golden Lord, who appeared like an intoxicated elephant, is none other than Lord Govinda. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Heart and Halo

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

The prejudice of our past experience, caught within us in a subtle form, has covered, like dust, the eye of our soul. Our inner vision is densely covered with the dust of many different misconceptions of separate interest, causing us to ignore the universal interest.

This mental cover is made up of the prejudices of local and provincial interest, and it keeps us from seeing reality: *visaya-dhulite kemane se paratattva paiye dekhite*. How will a person be able to read the universal wave when his mind is fully engrossed with local interest of different kinds? How can one detect the universal interest, the universal wave? Only one who has fully eliminated all kinds of local interest, and is eager to understand the universal wave, can see it clearly.

Arthesv abhijnah svarat: what is the purpose of the movement of this world? The answer is clear: "For itself." Reality is for itself; not to satisfy many, but to satisfy One. All the waves are meant to satisfy that One, and if we can put ourself on that level we can understand the truth; otherwise we are all cheaters.

We are far from the truth when we cannot see that everything, all waves are flowing towards the satisfaction of One, *svayam bhagavan*. We are laboring under a deception; we are deceivers who are not just deceiving ourself but the world also. We are guilty of misunderstanding everything and of carrying that false knowledge to others. Everyone, all the *baddha jivas*, are more or less cheaters, That is our position and we must be relieved of such misunderstanding, such deception; of our own self as well as of the environment, if we are to be placed in our proper position.

Then we can go there and find that universal wave, see it: *darsan..* Darsan means 'to see,' and how to see, that must be learned. What to see, how to read what is going on, in myself and outside, that is proper understanding and proper education. A proper understanding of one's own self and also of the environment is proper education. Education must be Vedic. The standard must be drawn from outside this area of *maya*, misunderstanding; it must be drawn from the perfect realm through *veda*, revealed truth.

We must accept revealed truth and bid farewell to so-called scientific knowledge and other kinds of perceptions, which are all erroneous, based on false experience and false information. "It belongs to me; it belongs to him; it belongs to them": this calculation is all false. So we have to be relieved, we have to get wholesale relief from this mania, this misconception. And not only must we get relief from the misconception, from misunderstanding the external waves, but we must attain a positive position, to learn to understand the wave, the vibration of *Goloka*. *Goloka* is the most universal, most fundamental plane, and if we can harmonize

ourself with that plane we will be led to Vrndavan, or Nabadwip, and there we shall see things as they are.

Some are more attracted to Krishna-lila, others more towards Nabadwip-lila, and others have an inclination to be accommodated in both places. In Krishna-lila also some are attracted to Radharani's camp, some to Krishna's camp and some are holding the middle position. We find this sort of division, and that is necessary for the lila, by the arrangement of yoga-maya.

So, in the highest plane, we find two kinds of pastimes, Krishna-lila and Gaura lila, and they are of the same value. In one there is transaction within a 'limited camp and in the other there is transaction, along with a tendency towards distribution to others. But they are of the same value. That which is being distributed, and that which is being enjoyed are of one and the same value of ecstasy, sweetness, love and beauty. Some are more attracted to the one lila, some to the other.

Within Gaura-lila also, we find those like Narahari Sarkara and his followers, who were more given to Krishna than Gauranga, and others who are more inclined towards Gauranga than to Krishna. This is all by grant of the Lord, the Supreme will-His lila.

In Gaura-lila, Gadadhara Pandit is holding the helm, everything belongs to him; still he has to admit he's dispossessed, that Gauranga has taken everything! He is exhaustively dedicated to Gauranga. So Srila Kaviraja Goswami says: teho laksmi-rupa, tara sama keha nai, that he represents the main potency of Gauranga, and no one is to be compared with him. This is the conclusion of Srila Kaviraja Goswami about Sri Gadadhara. He is gaura-prema-maya, the embodiment of Sri Gaura's love.

Gadadhara Das represents the halo of Radharani but Gadadhara Pandit represents Her mood, Her nature - Her heart. It is as if Mahaprabhu has taken away Gadadhara Pandit's soul, and the body is still standing! That is the position of Gadadhara Pandit; he is quite empty, and following Mahaprabhu. He is not full in himself. Something, the most important thing, his heart, has been taken by Mahaprabhu, so he has no other alternative but to follow Him. He is wholly given up to Mahaprabhu. Gadadhara Pandit's position, the part he played, was something like that of Radharani, Her heart stolen by Krishna, the empty body

still standing. Radha-bhava-dyuti-subalitam naumi Krishna-svarupam: He was fully engrossed in the conception of Sri Gauranga. Gauranga has taken everything from him, so he had no other alternative; he was fully engrossed, captured completely by Him.

We find his activity throughout his whole life was like this. Of the other devotees, some were ordered to go to Vrndavan, and some were allowed to go there, but though Gadadhara Pandit wanted to visit Vrndavan with Mahaprabhu Himself, he was denied: "No, you won't go." When Jagadananda Pandit asked to go there, Mahaprabhu, with hesitation, granted him permission, "Yes, go there, but move always under the guidance of Rupa and Sanatana." He also gave him some special instructions: "Do this, and this, and don't do that." But Gadadhara Pandit was not allowed to go there.

He was the representation of Srimati Radharani Herself, yet his peculiar position was such: the Queen of Vrndavan, but now transferred to Nabadwip. His position had become just the opposite; he could not enter Vrndavan! He prayed for permission, but Mahaprabhu did not give it. He said, "No, stay and live here." And he had to do so. Sri Gadadhara Pandit represents the predominated moiety of the Whole. The Whole consists of predominating and predominated moieties, and he represents the predominated half. He is one half of the Absolute Truth.

In the teachings of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, whose preaching was inspired by Sri Gadadhara Pandit and Sriman Mahaprabhu, we also find all the substance that is present in that plane of vibration. These two personalities, Sri Gadadhara Pandit and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, are our great gurus, our guides, and by offering our worship to them we can sow the seed of our highest benefit. By the grace of that great Guru-Maharaj Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada, we have been able to understand this.

And Bhaktivinoda Thakura, though generally he has his own position, as understood from the consideration of the disciple, Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura has seen Srimati Radharani in him: a 'relative' vision. He once said that Radharani represents the full play of asta-nayika, the eight characteristics of the heroine; we see that they are all perfectly represented in Her. In other places we may find partial representations of them, but we find them fully manifest only in Her.

He said, "I see my gurudeva as Guna-manjari, and in that manjari form he has some partial representation of Radharani. But if I attempt to look more deeply, I find him identified fully with Her; the eight kinds of qualities displayed in the service of Krishna (asta-nayika) are to be found there. If I look at him with my head a little more erect, I can see that he is one with Radharani. Acaryam mam vijaniyat: know the Acarya as Myself. If I give more attention to this sastric rule and try to search out the meaning, I find that Radharani comes to take her place there, in the position of my gurudeva." In this way he has seen in Bhaktivinoda Thakura the fullest representation of the cult of Sri Gauranga.

This realization is expressed in his poem where he says that he saw Svarupa Damodara Goswami in Gaura-kisor Dasa Babaji, and Sri Gadadhara Pandita in Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. In one place he has written:: gadadhara-din dhari' paiyacche gaura-hari, that he has accepted the day of the disappearance of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura to be identified with that of Sri Gadadhara Pandit. In another place, in his poem at the conclusion of his Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita commentary, he has written: "Here, in Nabadwip-dhama, the eternal pastimes are going on continuously; only those who have got that deep vision can perceive it".

*gadadhara mitra-vara,
sri svarupa damodara,
sada kala gaura-krsna yaje
jagatera dekhi' klesa,
dhariya bhiksuka-vesa,
aharahah krsna-nama bhaje
sri gaura icchaya dui,
mahima ki kava mui,
aprakṛta parisada-katha
prakata haiya seve,
krsna-gaurabhinna-deve,
aprakasya katha yatha tatha*

He says, it is very difficult to perceive the sweet will of Sri Gauranga, but if we can lift ourselves to that level, we see that Svarupa Damodar Goswami and Sri Gadadhara Pandit are always engaged in their service here in Nabadwip.

Sometimes it is suppressed and sometimes it is appearing on the surface. In that plane all is going on by the sweet will of Sri Gauranga, without any restriction. But now I find that those two have appeared on the surface as Srila Gaura-kisora Dasa Babaji and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. I have seen it with my own eye of divine service but this is not to be advertised, not to be given publicity anywhere and everywhere; people will laugh at it. But this is my heartfelt conclusion." He has written this in his poem concluding Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita.

So Gadadhara Pandit was identified with Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. That was the vision of our Gurudeva, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura. He could see in them the same identity. He considered siksa-guru parampara to be the most substantial thing.

Eliminating the sahajiya-vada which gives much importance to the outer cover, try to look within, and see things more deeply. Try to understand the deeper vibrations of the outside environment, and see within yourself also. Dive deep, and you will find the plane of the finest vibration which will carry that views to you, and you still see that truth.

५५

श्री स्वरूप कन्ध लग्न मातुर प्रलापकम्
 रादिहकानु वेदनार्त तीव्र विप्रलम्भकम्
 स्वप्नवत् समादिह दिष्टत दिव्य वर्णानातुरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

55

śrī-svarūpa-kaṇṭha-lagna-māthura-pralāpakam
 rādhikānu-vedanārtta-tīvra-vipralambhakam
 svapnavat-samādhi-dṛṣṭa-divya-varṇanāturam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Clasping the neck of Sri Swarup Damodar, Sri Gauranga began to recite the sad prayers spoken by Srimati Radhika in the agony of separation after Lord Krishna left Vrindaban and went to the city of Mathura. Sri Gauranga continuously tasted the blazing mood of Srimati Radhika. He experienced untold agony in the burning fire of Her separation from Krishna. With a heavy heart, in a divine trance, the Lord spoke to Sri Swarup Damodar and other most intimate associates, speaking of Sri Radhika's feelings of separation (*vipralambha-bhava*). Those discussions of Sri Chaitanya and his dearest devotees are just like dreams to outsiders.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The service of Sri Radha by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

The Gaudiya Vaisnavas know only Radharani. They are concerned only with Her and Her duties, Her necessities. They are ready to serve Her in all respects, and cannot contemplate any service without Her. That is the highest achievement of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas, that is the special feature of Mahaprabhu's party, and that was announced by Raghunatha Dasa Goswami.

There is a hope which is sustaining me and nurturing my existence. With that hope I am somehow passing my days. But my patience has reached its end. I can't endure it any longer. At this moment if You do not show Your grace to me, Sri Radha, I shall lose my prospect forever. I shall have no desire to continue my life.

And Vrndavana, which is even dearer to me than my life itself - I am disgusted with it. And what to speak of anything else, I am even disgusted with Krsna. It is shameful to utter such words, but I can have no love even for Krsna unless and until You take me within Your confidential camp of service.

Once, the Diwan of Bharatpur had come on a pilgrimage with his family to the holiest of places, Sri Radha-kunda, the holy lake of Srimati Radharani. He and his family were circumambulating Radhakunda. They would fall flat on the ground, offering obeisances lying down with their arms outstretched. Every time they bowed down in this way, they would mark the spot where their fingertips touched the earth. Then they would slowly rise, step forward to where that spot had been marked, and again fall flat, offering their obeisances with great respect and adoration. In this way they were circumambulating the entire Radha-kunda. Upon seeing such intense worship, Paramananda Prabhu, an intimate disciple of our guru maharaja Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, intimated to Prabhupada that the Diwan and his family must have great respect for Radharani to circumambulate the Radha-kunda in such a fashion.

At that time Prabhupada said, "Their angle of vision towards Radhakunda and Radharani is different from ours. They recognize and revere Krsna. And because Radharani is Krsna's favorite, they also have some reverence for Radha-kunda. But our vision is just the opposite. Our concern is with Radharani. And only because She wants Krsna do we have any connection with Him."

And so, the Gaudiya Vaisnavas know only Radharani. They are concerned only with Her, and Her duties, Her necessities. They are ready to serve Her in all respects, and cannot contemplate any service without Her. That is the highest achievement of the Gaudiya Vaisnavas, that is the special feature of Mahaprabhu's party, and that was announced by Raghunatha Dasa Goswami in his Vilapakusumanjali (102):

*asabharair-amrta-sindhu-mayaih kathancit
kalo mayatigamitah kila sampratam hi
tvam cet krpam mayi vidhasyasi naiva kim me
pranair vraje na ca varoru bakarinapi*

This verse is a direct prayer to Radharani. It expresses a particular type of hope which is so sweet and reassuring that it is compared with an unlimited ocean of

nectar. He says, "There is a hope which is sustaining me and nurturing my existence. With that hope I am somehow passing my days, dragging my life through these tedious times. That nectarine ocean of hope is attracting me and keeping me alive. But my patience has reached its end. I can't endure it any longer. I can't wait any more. "At this moment if You do not show Your grace to me, I am finished. I shall lose my prospect forever. I shall have no desire to continue my life. It will all be useless. Without Your grace, I can't stand to live another moment. And Vrndavana, which is even dearer to me than my life itself - I am disgusted with it. It is painful; it is always pinching me. And what to speak of anything else, I am even disgusted with Krsna. It is shameful to utter such words, but I can have no love even for Krsna unless and until You take me within Your confidential camp of service." This is the prayer of Raghunatha Dasa.

When Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada would begin to explain this verse, his figure would become transformed. He would become full of emotion; his face would become like that of a phantom.

In this verse, Raghunatha Dasa Goswami, taking an extreme risk, says, "O Radha, if I do not get Your favor, I don't want anything. I want You and You alone. To have an independent relationship with anyone else, eliminating You, is impossible in my life. You must be first, and then others. Without You, we can never even think of a separate relationship with Krsna." Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja has written that without Radharani's company, Krsna is not beautiful. Everything is relative - dependent. A teacher depends on the student, and the student depends on his teacher. Although Krsna is the enjoyer, He is completely dependent on the enjoyed, Srimati Radharani. The two are correlative; one cannot be separated from the other. As the enjoyed, Radharani is also absolutely dependent on Krsna, the enjoyer.

Radharani says, "My fate is lost forever because I have given Myself, I have sold Myself to many places. When I heard the flute, I dedicated Myself to the song of the flute. When I heard the name of Krsna, I dedicated Myself to that sound. And when I saw a beautiful picture of Krsna, I wholly dedicated Myself to that picture. So in three places I have sold Myself completely, with no possibility of any happiness or peace in My life. If I had dedicated Myself to only one thing, there might have been a possibility of peace, but because I have dedicated Myself in three different places, I am hopeless.

"Seeing the picture of Krsna, I couldn't contain Myself. I couldn't but give Myself to that beautiful figure, and so I dedicated Myself fully. The name of Krsna also purchased Me fully. And the sweet sound from the flute - that has also drawn Me to the extreme of dedication. So how can I hope for peace in My life? It is impossible, My friends." Radharani did not know it at that time, but the source of Krsna's flute, His name, and His beauty are one. If She could have seen how all three of these meet together, then it would have been possible for Her to have peace of mind. But it is difficult to understand this principle. How is it that the sound of Krsna's flute, the sound of His name, and a picture of His form are nondifferent from Krsna Himself? Idealism. In Hegel's words, ideal realism. The absolute idea is not to be dismissed as an abstract thing; rather, it is the basis of all existence. Reality is there, but it is ideal realism. And the foundation of the reality of Vrndavana is given by Nityananda, Baladeva: nitaiyer koruna habe, braje radha-krsna pabe, dharo nitai-carana du'khani.

After Bhaktivinoda Thakura describes the position of Radharani in his Saranagati, he says, "I want to serve those who have the service of Radharani in their heart. I want to serve the feet-dust of those whose only wealth is the service of Sri Radha. I want to fall before them and take the dust of their holy feet. If you cannot fix your mind in the service of Radharani, then all your attempts to serve Krsna are useless. If you cannot achieve earnestness in the service of Srimati Radharani, then all your labor for Krsna has gone to hell." We cannot conceive of a sun without heat, nor can we conceive of Godhead without His potency. So also, no conception of Krsna is possible without Srimati Radharani. We can't know any Madhava without Radha.

She is Krsna's other half - in Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's language, the predominated moiety. Devotional service as a whole is represented by Her, because both the intensity and the comprehensiveness of Her service to Krsna are unparalleled. There are so many examples of chaste and pious ladies in the ancient history of the Puranas: Saci, the faithful wife of Indra; Sati, the wife of Lord Siva; Laksmidevi, the goddess of fortune; Satyabhama, Krsna's wife in Dvaraka; Rukmini, the principle queen of Krsna in Dvaraka; and even the antagonists of Radharani, headed by Candravali. All of them represent different aspects of Radharani. They all spring from the main potency which is known as Radha.

The name Radha comes from the word aradhana: One who can serve, who can worship, who can give respect, who really loves Krsna, who can render loving

service. All of these other ladies who are famous for their chastity and piety are but partial representations of Radharani. If we note the scriptures and scrutinize the position of those virtuous ladies, we'll find that the source of all their chastity and devotion is Srimati Radharani. She is the fountainhead of devotion.

And so Bhaktivinoda says, "I bow down and take the dust of the holy feet of those who have as their only wealth the service of Radharani. I hanker after nothing else." Whoever knows this and always travels on that path with a sincere heart is most fortunate.

It is the ideal that makes one great, not any material possession. One who has the highest ideal is really wealthy. The highest ideal is the most valuable thing we may possess. And less valuable things must be eliminated if we are to concentrate our efforts and save ourselves from useless endeavor. Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to show us that highest ideal - the path of divine love. And we find divine love of Godhead in its highest intensity in His life and teachings of Srimad-Bhagavatam. The whole Srimad-Bhagavatam is meant to illustrate the ideal of divine love which reaches its highest expression in Srimati Radharani. The Srimad-Bhagavatam sings very gloriously about the paramour relationship of Radha and Krsna.

The Vedas and other Puranas are not so expressive about such confidential pastimes, yet we find a hint of the glories of Radha and Krsna in Srimad-Bhagavatam. And the Goswamis have more fully expressed Radharani's devotion in their writings. In Rupa Goswami's Padyavali, we find Her saying, "My Lord, people say that I have a bad reputation because of My connection with You. I do not feel any trouble in My heart because of this. My concern is that I could not give Myself to You completely. The people in general say that I am illicitly connected with You, but what disturbs Me is that I could not really give Myself to You. I feel that I am not fit for Your service. This is only the trouble within My heart."

And the ecstasy of divine love increases in separation. One day, when Krsna was playing with His cowherd boyfriends in the pasturing grounds of Vrndavana, Krsna suddenly felt extreme separation from Radharani. He sent His best friend Subala to Radharani, saying, "Go to My Radha and fetch Her. Without Her, I can't live. Suddenly I have so much desire for Her company that I can't stand it anymore. Somehow manage to bring Her." Subala said, "How is it possible to

bring Her here in the jungle in broad daylight?" Krsna told him, "Somehow manage it!"

Subala thought, "What should I do?" Subala was very intimately connected with the family of Radharani's husband. He went to the house of Radharani and told Her girlfriends, "Krsna can't tolerate separation from Radharani any longer. He is so eager to meet Her that He is going mad. Somehow you have to arrange for Them to meet." "How is it possible?" the gopis asked. Subala explained to them that Krsna was nearby in the jungle. They discussed between themselves what to do. Subala was a beautiful boy who resembled Radharani. So Subala took the dress of Radharani, and Radharani wore Subala's cowherd dress.

When Radharani was discovered wearing the dress of Subala, She was challenged by Her family members: "Subala! What are you doing here?" In the dress of Subala, Radharani said, "A calf is missing and its mother is mooing. So I have come here looking for that calf." So a calf was given to Radharani, and She carried that small calf on her breast into the forest. In this way, Radharani was disguised as Subala, while Subala, who had taken the dress of Radharani, remained behind in Her room.

Radharani had been given a hint of where Krsna was hiding near the forest's edge. She went to seek Him out. At last, when Radharani saw Krsna, She approached Him in the garb of Subala. Krsna was mad. He could not detect that Radharani had come, but mistook Her for Subala. He said, "Oh, Subala, you have come back without Radharani! Couldn't you bring Her?"

Radharani began cutting jokes: "No," She said, "It was impossible for me to bring Her in the daytime." Krsna said, "Then what am I to do? I can't tolerate My life any longer." Radharani said, "If You say so, I can go to Candravali and bring her." "No, no," Krsna said, "Curd cannot satisfy the thirst for milk. It is not possible!" Krsna was faint with disappointment. Then Radharani embraced Him, saying, "My Lord, can't You recognize Your maidservant? You failed to recognize Me!" Then Krsna was again full of joy.

Although the pastimes of Radha and Govinda are mentioned in the scriptures, these are all very high things. They are not ordinarily to be expressed in words, but still sometimes we are forced to speak about them because the high ideal of divine love given by Srimad- Bhagavatam is the supreme goal of life.

Of course, the scholarship of Sukadeva Goswami and Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu have helped, to a certain extent, to establish the dignity of the proposal that love is above knowledge. It was admitted by everyone that Sukadeva held the highest attainment of the learned men of knowledge; he was unanimously admitted by the scholars to hold the highest position. Because of this, when Sukadeva Goswami came to inaugurate the principle that divine love is above everything else, the scholars had to take notice. Caitanya Mahaprabhu demonstrated to the scholars that His intelligence and scholarship excelled everyone else's. So when He came with the tidings of divine love, then it was easier for the ordinary men to accept it as the highest ideal and try for it.

So Vasudeva Ghosh says, *yadi gaura na ha'te tabe ki haita kemane dharitam de*. If Mahaprabhu had not appeared in this Kali-yuga, then how could we tolerate living? How could we sustain our lives? What He has given - the very gist of life, the very taste, the charm of life - without that, we think it is impossible for anyone to live in this world. Such a thing has been invented, discovered by Gauranga. If He had not come, then how could we live? It is impossible to live devoid of such a holy and gracious thing as divine love. Without Caitanya Mahaprabhu, how could we know that Radharani stands supreme in the world of divine love? We have received all these things from Him, and now we think that life is worth living. Otherwise to live would be suicidal.

And serving those who can serve Radharani is the way to approach Her vicinity. By serving the servants of the servants, we are assured of success in getting the grace of Krsna. If somehow one can be counted in the group of Srimati Radharani's servitors, one's future is assured.

Within the group of Radharani's servitors, we aspire to be rupanugas, followers of Sri Rupa. And the followers of Sri Rupa will have great earnestness to look after the order of Sri Rupa, as he does towards Lalita. In this way, through Rupa Goswami, our devotional service is going to the highest plane. And our highest gain is only there. Not even our connection with Radharani or Lalitadevi is the highest goal of life, but our highest aspiration is to serve in the Rupanugasampradaya; that means that our highest attainment is in Sri Rupa's connection.

Radha-dasyam has been said to be the highest attainment. Why? The quality and quantity of rasa that Radharani can draw from Krsna can never be found

anywhere else. So if you are situated just behind Radharani, you'll be allowed to taste not only the quantity, but the highest quality of rasa.

No other person can draw such high rasa from Krsna. The fullest, highest type of quality is drawn from Krsna: He gives Himself fully and wholly and deeply. So if you are in Sri Rupa's group, then you can have a taste of that sort of rasa. In Radharani's camp, when Krsna and Radha are enjoying very solitary pastimes in a secluded place, the grown-up sakhs can't venture to enter the room and assist Them. The young girls, the manjaris, are sent there. The leader of that young group can enter where both Radha and Govinda are very closely connected, when even the sakhs do not venture to go for fear of causing some interruption. But Rupa and the manjaris can enter there at that time due to their young age. That sort of rasa that cannot be had even through the sakhs can be had only through the manjaris.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura prays to gain admission there. He has such a high quality of aspiration. He says rupanuga hoite sei doy. He runs to be enlisted in the group of Rupa, who can grant us that sort of prospect. And Prabhodananda Saraswati has described the prerequisite for understanding all these things:

*yatha yatha gaura padaravinde
vindeta bhaktim kṛta punya-rasih
tatha tathotsarpati hr̥dy akasmat
radha padambhoja sudhambhurasih*

"As much as you surrender to the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga, you'll find yourself safely situated in the service of Radha-Govinda. Don't try to approach Radha-Govinda directly; if you do, there may be some difficulty. But the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga will take you there safely." In my Sanskrit poem dedicated to Bhaktivinoda Thakura, I have explained all these points:

*sri-gauranumatam svarupa-viditam rupagrajenadr̥tam
rupadyaih parivesitam raghu-ganair-asvadam sevitam
jivadyair abhiraksitam suka-siva-brahmadi sammanitam
sri-radha-pada-sevanamrtam aho tad datum iso bhavan*

"What was sanctioned by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by His descent was intimately known only to Sri Svarupa Damodara Goswami. It was adored by Sanatana Goswami and served by Rupa Goswami and his followers. Raghunatha Dasa Goswami tasted that wonderful thing fully and enhanced it with his own realization. And Jiva Goswami supported and protected it by quoting the scriptures from different places. The taste of that divine truth is aspired for by Brahma, Siva, and Uddhava, who respect it as the supreme goal of life. What is this wonderful truth? Sri radha-pada-sevana: that the highest nectar of our life is the service of Srimati Radharani. This is most wonderful. O Bhaktivinoda Thakura, you are our master. It is within your power to allow them to bestow their grace upon us. You are in a position to bestow the highest gift ever known to the world upon us all. It is at your disposal. O Bhaktivinoda Thakura, please be kind to us and grant us your mercy."

So Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, our most benevolent Lord, has come to search for His long lost servants and to give to them this highest ideal of divine love.

५६

सात्विकादि ब्हाव चिह्नं देहं दिव्यं सौश्रूतवत्
 कूर्मं दहर्मं ब्रिन्नं सन्दिहं गात्रं पुष्पं पेलवम्
 ह्रस्वं दीर्घं पद्मं गन्धं रक्तं पीतं पान्दुरम्
 प्रेमं द्दहाम् देवम् ऐव नौमि गौरं सुन्दरम्

56

sātvikādi-bhāva-cihna-deha-divya-sauṣṭhavam
 kūrma-dharma-bhinna-sandhi-gātra-puṣpa-pelavam
 hrasva-dīrgha-padma-gandha-rakta-pīta-pāṇḍuram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

The eightfold symptoms of pure devotion (*asta-sattvika-bhava*) enhance the beauty of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's transcendental form. He would sometimes withdraw his limbs into his body like a tortoise. Sometimes his body appeared elongated with his joints becoming slackened and dislocated. Sometimes Lord Gaurasundara's figure was as soft and tender as a sweet scented lotus flower. At other times the Lord's body would appear red, yellow, or brilliant white like the mallika flower.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

५७

तीव्र विप्रलम्ब मुग्ध मन्दिराग्र द्हावितम्
 कूर्म रूप दिव्य गन्ध लुब्ध द्हेनु वैशित्तम्
 वर्नितालि कूल क्रिह केलि शैल कन्दरम्
 प्रेम द्हाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

57

tīvra-vipralambha-mugdha-mandirāgra-dhāvitam
 kūrma-rūpa-divya-gandha-lubdha-dhenu-veṣṭitam
 varpitāli-kūla-kṛṣṇa-keli-śaila-kandaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Grief-stricken and overwhelmed with the feelings of separation, in the dark of night Lord Chaitanya ran to the lion-gate at the entrance of Lord Jagannatha's temple. He fell to the ground and manifest the form of the tortoise incarnation Kurma. An extraordinarily sweet fragrance of nectar emanated from the Lord's unconscious figure, attracting the telangi cows who reside at Lord Jagannatha's temple. The cows surrounded the Lord and began licking his divine body. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

**Advice to pilgrims visiting Purushottama kshetra
 by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj**

Tomorrow you are going to Puri, a special place of pilgrimage. There you will see that the servitors of the Jagannath temple, known as Pandas, hold a very special position. There is a saying, "If you love me, love my dog." It means, if you love me, you will also show your love to my dog; then I will know that you really love me. Lord Jagannath has given the Pandas the position of controllers there, so whatever they do, we have no say in that.

Mahaprasada is available all over the world, but in Jagannath-kshetra it is different. There the Pandas don't let just anyone go inside the temple. They especially do not let anyone enter the temple whom they consider to be low-class or mleccchas. But when Mahaprasada comes out of that very same temple, then they will eat it out of the hands of the most low-class people, the mleccchas. This

means that they follow some customs. They follow a custom that was introduced by Lord Jagannath.

Ramanujacharyya wanted to break that custom, but what was the result of that? Ramanujacharyya wanted the worship of Lord Jagannath to be done in the vidhi-marga. There are some rules and regulations in the Vedas, and especially in the Manu-samhita, and he wanted the worship to be done in a bona fide way following these rules and regulations. He thought the way the Pandas were doing the worship was not the customary way, the mantras they were using were not the right ones, and he wanted that the worship be done in the right way. All the scholars there were defeated by him. The next day, the final meeting was supposed to take place, and the King would have been forced to introduce the Vedic way of worship. While Ramanujacharyya was sleeping that night, his bed was thrown three hundred miles away to Kurmakshetra. In the morning he wondered where he was, and found that it was Kurmakshetra. In those days there were no aeroplanes. It was not possible that someone chloroformed him at night and carried him away by aeroplane. But Ramanujacharyya really saw that he was in Kurmakshetra, with his whole entourage; Lord Jagannath had transported them Himself. Lord Jagannath also gave him a dream in which He told him, "The way I am being served here will continue. Please do not interfere. Go from here."

It is hard to find accommodation in a special place like this. But by the influence of Srila Guru Maharaj and the mercy of Lord Jagannath we found some accommodation and built a temple of Sri Sri Nitai Chaitanyadev and guesthouse there, and now we have been able to acquire a bit more space. Now Srila Guru Maharaj's desires are fulfilled, so we can see that Lord Jagannath has some special goodwill towards us. Before, I could not go there in spite of a lot of effort, but now Lord Jagannath is dragging me there every now and then.

I do not know if tomorrow I will be able to go with you. I am praying to Lord Jagannath, because I know I will only be able to go if He takes me there, not otherwise. But He has attracted all of you. That is why you have all come here, and joining with the sadhus and the devotees of this ashrama, you have found the opportunity to go there. You see, money is needed in every situation in life. To survive and go through our daily lives, money is always spent. Yet money is not everything. There is no guarantee that if I have money I will be able to go. This is a truth that has been proved many times in my life. You all pray to Lord

Jagannath that He will take us safely there, and then bring us all back safely to where we are doing our respective seva. This is our only prayer today. We have nothing else for which to pray.

We are not going sightseeing but we are going to a place of pilgrimage, a holy place. Going there will purify us: body, mind, and soul. We are going to the shore of the sea. Mahaprabhu has said, "From today this ocean has become a mahatirtha." As it is, the ocean is a great place of pilgrimage, because the waters of all the holy rivers merge there. In addition to that, at the disappearance of Srila Haridas Thakur, Mahaprabhu danced with his body in His arms, and when He bathed his body in the ocean, Mahaprabhu said, "From today the ocean has really become a great place of pilgrimage."

Why? It is said in the Srimad-Bhagavatam, "Those who always carry Gadadhara, the Supreme Lord, in their heart, if they cannot purify the places of pilgrimage, then who can? They are places of pilgrimage personified, and they have no need to go on pilgrimage."

Then why do they go to places of pilgrimage? The really sinful people contaminate the places of pilgrimage. Everyone and everything has a particular capacity. We also have a particular capacity, that is, the burden of our sin is so great that even a place of pilgrimage cannot digest it. This is how a place of pilgrimage automatically becomes contaminated. At that time the great personalities who carry the Supreme Lord in their heart, appear there. As soon as they bathe in the holy water, the water becomes clean, as if a purifying agent has cleansed it. That is their natural capacity.

Mahaprabhu has demonstrated the supreme example of this. Mahaprabhu said that the ocean at Puri became the greatest place of pilgrimage when He bathed the body of Haridas Thakur there. Haridas Thakur used to chant three hundred thousand names of the Lord every day. He even purified the animate and inanimate environment around him when he chanted aloud. His purity was beyond question.

The Western devotees who have come to India will not be allowed to enter the Jagannath Temple, but still they go there again and again, because they are attracted by Mahaprabhu's Pastimes in Jagannath-Dham.

Of all the places, Mahaprabhu chose Jagannath-Dham, which is non-different from Kurukshetra. Bhaktivinoda Thakur has said that Kurukshetra is the highest place of worship for us. Why? Where the hankering is greatest, that is the highest place of fulfilment. If you do not have hunger, you will not be able to enjoy even a sumptuous feast. If on the other hand you are starving, even rice with salt or spinach will taste like ambrosia. In my childhood I had malaria, and my doctor recommended something called, "poder bhat." Do you know how poder bhat is made? A little bit of rice is boiled over a fire that is fuelled with a few cow dung patties, and it takes a very long time to boil. So the rice was boiling for hours and I was looking at it, thinking when I will be able to eat it.

This demand that comes from inside is the highest thing for us. This is called hankering, and this is raganuga-bhakti.

The kind of devotion which is, krishna-bhakti-rasa-bhavita which one's entire consciousness is soaked in the nectar of loving devotion for Krishna is not ordinary devotion. The demand of such love is also not a small demand.

The Lord Himself says,

*sadhavo hrdayam mahyam
sadhnam hrdayam tv aham
mad-anyat te na jananti
naham tebhyo manag api*
(Srimad-Bhagavatam, 9.4.68)

The Lord is telling Durvasa Muni, "There is nothing I can do. My pure devotees have bound Me with their love, and I have also bound them with My love. Thus we are indebted to each other. I cannot be impartial."

Krishna says, "My devotees charm Me with their seva. Their only demand is to serve Me. They don't want anything else." If in the process of seva they feel some joy or happiness, then they think they have committed some offence; they feel they are probably in the mood of enjoyment. Just to see that, Krishna gives them a lot of seva. He gives them so much seva that they become intoxicated with it. Krishna thinks, "What is this? Radharani becomes so ecstatic by seeing Me?"

What is the depth of that ecstasy? How can I measure it? I cannot measure it, because I cannot become Radharani." Then:

*shri-radhaya pranaya-mahima kidrisho vanayaiva
svadyo yenadbhuta-madhurima kidrisho va madiya
saukhya casya mad-anubhavata kidrisha veti lobha*

Mahaprabhu went to Jagannath-Dham, which is Kurukshetra. Why? Because there Srimati Radharani is thinking, "My Lord is tearing My heart apart." Srimati Radharani knows that Krishna is Her life and soul. But there She sees that He is surrounded by His children, friends, relatives, and queens, and they are all swarming over the whole place. She is just a simple milkmaid who would generally not be given any attention in such a royal gathering. But they gave Her attention, and in a very special way. They requested Her to show them the Rasa Dance, which is performed only in Vrindavan. When they saw that, they were amazed. They said, "We have never experienced anything so wonderful." Then Radharani smiled. She said, "What have you seen? You have seen a headless body, a dead thing. You have not seen the real thing: that you can see only in Vrindavan. Where is that Yamuna? Where are the groves of kadamba trees? Where is the chirping of the peacocks and parrots? And where is the Lord of our hearts, Krishna, who plays the flute and herds the cows? None of those things are here, so how can you see the Rasa dance here? What you have seen is the shadow. If you want to see the real thing, you have to go to Vrindavan."

On another occasion Krishna told Uddhava what the highest fulfilment of bhakti is:

*na tatha me priyatama atmayonir na shankara
na ca sankarshano na shrir-naivatma ca yatha bhavan*
(Srimad-Bhagavatam, 11.14.15)

("My dear Uddhava, even Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Lord Sankarshana, the goddess of fortune Lakshmi-devi and indeed My own self are not as dear to Me as you are.") But Uddhava himself was thinking,

*asam aho carana-remu-jusham aham syat,
vrindavane kim api gulma-lataushadhinam*

*ya dustyajam svajanam aryya-patha- ca hitva
bhejur mukunda-padavim shrutibhir vimrigyam
(Srimad-Bhagavatam, 10.48.61)*

When Uddhava went to Vrindavan he was so charmed by seeing the Gopis love, their devotion, their attraction, and their affection for Krishna, that he said, "For life after life, I only desire one thing: I want to become a speck of dust in Vrindavan. Not only that, I want to be one of those who are worthy of receiving that dust, the plants and creepers of Vrindavan, and live here for all eternity. Here in the land of Vrindavan, Krishna has performed His Pastimes, and His companions, the Gopis, also roam around here. If I can be born as a small creeper so that I may get the dust of their lotus feet on my head, that will be my highest fortune."

Such are the glories of Krishna, and the intense feeling of separation from Him: Vipralambha. Mahaprabhu has shown us the highest limit of that Vipralambha in Sri Nilacala-Dham.

Sri Gadadhara Pandit, who kept Mahaprabhu in the depths of his heart, and performed the supreme seva, also lived there. Mahaprabhu took sannyasa and went to Jagannath Puri, and by His desire Lord Gopinath became manifest. When you go to Puri you will all see Lord Gopinath there. Both the feelings of Mahaprabhu and the feelings of Gadadhara Pandit were described in a beautiful shloka by our Srila Guru Maharaj:

*nilambhodhitate sada svavirahakshepanvitam bandhavam
shrimad-bhagavati katha madiraya sanjivayan bhati yah
shrimad bhagavatam sada svanayanashrayanaipjayan
gosvami-pravaro gadadhara-vibhur bhayad mad eka gatih*

The lotus feet of Gadadhara Pandit are our sole treasure. He resided by the ocean of Vipralambha which was manifest by his life and soul, Lord Gauranga, who took everything from him. Mahaprabhu was suffering separation from Krishna, and His feelings of separation were so intense, that sometimes His body became elongated, sometimes He retracted His limbs like a tortoise, and sometimes His joints became separated.

So Mahaprabhu, Sri Krishna Himself, suffered intense separation from Krishna, and He was enlivened by hearing topics about Lord Krishna from Gadadhara Pandit: When a person is in intense grief, what does he do? He becomes blinded by his grief, and he cannot decide how he will find some peace, so he drinks alcohol. Sri Gadadhara Pandit provided such intoxication for Mahaprabhu by enlivening Him with the intoxicating topics of Srimad-Bhagavatam. This is how he served the Lord of his heart.

And how were Gadadhara Pandit's own feelings of separation? He is seeing that his beloved Lord is in front of him, and his Lord is suffering so intensely that He is becoming unconscious now and then. All the eight symptoms of separation can be seen in His body, such as perspiring, trembling, tears, becoming stunned, changing of bodily colour, etc., but there is nothing he can do about it. Lamenting this, continuous floods of tears flowed from his eyes.

Whenever Gadadhara Pandit read the Bhagavatam, he became so mad with feelings of separation from Krishna that his tears would wash away the letters on the page. The proof of this is when Srinivasa Acharyya came to him to study Srimad-Bhagavatam, Gadadhara Pandit told him, "My dear son, when I was reading Bhagavatam to Mahaprabhu all the letters in my book were washed away, therefore I cannot now read to you from this book. Please find a book somewhere. Mahaprabhu instructed me in my dream, saying you were coming. But you need to have a book. I have memorised everything, but you need a book also."

Gadadhara Pandit thus worshipped the Bhagavatam with his tears. Is it necessary to have any ingredients to worship? One's own tears are the best ingredients.

The lotus feet of this Gadadhara Pandit are our ultimate destination. Our worshipable Deities are Gaura-Gadadhara, and the supreme demonstration of their Vipralambha was seen in Nilacala-Dham.

In Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Krishna Dasa Kaviraj has given such deep meanings of the shlokas of Srimad-Bhagavatam, and he has exposed such great inner wealth from them that it is beyond our imagination. When Mahaprabhu sees Lord Jagannath in Rathayatra, He prays like this:

*ahus ca te nalina-nabha padaravindam
yogeshvarair hridi vicintyam agadha-bodhaih
samsara-kripa-patitottaranavalambam
geham jusham api manasy udiyat sada nah
(Srimad-Bhagavatam, 10.82.49)*

("O lotus-navelled one, Your lotus feet, eternally held as the object of meditation within the hearts of the greatest yogis of profound intellect, are the only resort for delivering those souls fallen into the well of material life. May those holy lotus feet graciously appear within the hearts of we ordinary household ladies.")

And in Chaitanya-caritamrita we find these shlokas:

*anyera hridaya mana, mora mana-vrindavana,
"mane" "vane" eka kari jani
taha' tomara pada-dvaya, karaha yadi udaya,
tabe tomara prna kripa mani
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 13.137)*

(Speaking in the mood of Srimati Radharani, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "For most people, the mind and heart are one, but because My mind is never separated from Vrindavan, I consider My mind and Vrindavan to be one. My mind is already Vrindavan, and since You like Vrindavan, will You please place Your lotus feet there? I would deem that Your full mercy.")

*prana-natha, shuna mora satya nivedana vraja amara sadana, taha' tomara
sangama, na paille na rahe jivana (Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 13.138)*

("My dear Lord, kindly hear My true submission. My home is Vrindavan, and I wish Your association there. But if I do not get it, then it will be very difficult for Me to keep My life.")

*purve uddhava-dvare, ebe sakshat amare,
yogajane kahila upaya
tumi vidagdha, kripamaya, janaha amara hridaya,
more aiche kahite na yuyaya
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 13.139)*

("My dear Krishna, formerly, when You were staying in Mathura, You sent Uddhava to teach Me knowledge and meditation. Now You Yourself are speaking the same thing, but my mind doesn't accept it. There is no place in My mind for all these superficial things. You are artful and gracious, and You know well my heart it does not befit You to speak to me in this way.")

*nahe gopi yogeshvara, pada-kamala tomara,
dhyana kari paibe santosha
tomara vakya-paripati, tara madhye kutinati,
shuni gopira aro badhe rosha*
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 13.141)

(The Gopis are not like the mystic yogis. They will never be satisfied simply by meditating on Your lotus feet and imitating the so-called yogis. Teaching the Gopis about so called meditation is another kind of duplicity. When they are instructed to undergo mystic yoga practices, they are not at all satisfied. On the contrary, they become more angry with You.")

What intense feelings of separation the Gopis had! "What are You saying to whom?"

*deha-smriti nahi yara, sa'sara-kpa kaha' tara,
taha haite na cahe uddhara*
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 13.142)

The Gopis are saying, "People worship You to be delivered from material existence, but that is not our kind of worship. We do not want to be delivered. We do not even remember our bodies. What do we care about material existence? And You are saying we will be delivered from material existence!"

*ahush ca te nalina-nabha padaravindam yogeshvarair hridi vicintyam agadha-
bodhaih:* 'those processes are only for people who want to be delivered. Your lotus feet are our only goal.' "Taha' tomara pada-dvaya, karaha yadi udaya, tabe tomara prna kripa mani.

In Nilacala-Dham, there has been the utmost cultivation of such intense feelings of Vipralambha.

*candidasa, vidyapati, rayera nataka-giti,
karnamrita, shri gita-govinda
svarpa-ramananda-sane, mahaprabhu ratri-dine,
gaya, shune parama ananda
(Sri Chaitanya-caritamrita, Madhya-lila, 2.77)*

("He also passed His time reading the books and singing the songs of Chandidas and Vidyapati, and listening to quotations from the Jagannath-vallabha-nartaka, Krishna-karnamrita and Gita-govinda. Thus in the association of Svarpa Damodara and Raya Ramananda, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu passed His days and nights chanting and hearing with supreme ecstasy.")

So tomorrow you are going to that place. Lord Jagannath has attracted you by His mercy. We will all feel our goals fulfilled there, and if we can humbly offer ourselves, then we will become complete.

*om purnam adah purnam idam
purnat purnam udacyate purnasya
purnam adaya purnam evavashishyate
(Sri Ishopanishad)*

We may be very small, but He is infinite. If we can establish a relationship with the infinite, then just as when you subtract zero from zero, zero remains, similarly when you subtract infinity from infinity, infinity will remain. So we can become complete. So please go to Jagannath-Dham with such feelings in your heart.

There is happiness and misery everywhere at home and outside. I definitely know that you do not care too much about such things. But still, at times such feelings come to us because we have material bodies. This body is like a spoiled brat that does not like to tolerate any inconvenience. The more comfort it gets, the more comfort it wants. But comfort is our enemy. There is no need for such comforts in our life.

As elephants, we have eaten so many jungles, and our hunger was not satisfied.

As pigs, we have eaten mountains of stool, and our hunger was not satisfied. For life after life we have searched for comfort, but we have not found it. So now we must separate ourselves from such comforts and search for Lord Krishna, the Ocean of Pleasure, the Personification of all Mellows. We can have Him in our vision by initiating ourselves in bhakti-yoga. This will fulfil our highest mission, and this should be the object of our greatest desire.

Please, you all go there with such desires in your heart. I am sure there will be some inconveniences. Our brahmacari Prabhus are all very respectable and affectionate, and they will try their best to give you all facility, but still you may face some austerity.

Please go with such desires to Lord Jagannath, that by His mercy He will appear in our vision, and He will give us the dust of His Holy Dham, so that we can travel there. This is our only desire and prayer.

५८

इन्दु सिन्दुह त्रित्य दीप्त क्रिश्ण केलि मोहितम्
 ऊर्मि शीर्ष सुप्त देह वात रन् वाहितम्
 यामुनालि क्रिश्ण केलि मग्न सौक्क्य सागरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

58

indu-sindhu-ṇṛtya-dīpta-kṛṣṇa-keli-mohitam
 ūrmī-śīrṣa-supta-deha-vāta-ranga-vāhitam
 yāmunāli-kṛṣṇa-keli-magna-saukhyā-sāgaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

On one moonlit night, Lord Gaurangadeva was wandering along the ocean's shore with his associates. He was relishing sweet discussions about the mellows of Sri Krishna's pastimes. Suddenly, Sri Gauranga saw the reflection of the moon dancing upon the rolling waves and he became overwhelmed with memories of Sri Krishna's playful pastimes in the Yamuna river with the Gopis. Lord Gauranga fell unconscious on the sand. Then suddenly, unseen by the devotees, the Lord's form (which seemed to be sleeping) became as light as air and he was carried away by the wind. The Lord's golden form drifted upon the crests of the rolling waves on the sea. His body was floating on the waves and inwardly, in a divine trance, Sri Chaitanyadev was seeing Lord Krishna's water-sport pastimes in the Kalindi River with his dearest cowherd maiden friends. Sri Chaitanya dove deep and swam in the ocean of remembrance of Lord Krishna's water-sport pastimes.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

५९

रात्रि शेशह सौम्य वेश शायितार्द्र सैकतम्
 ब्भिन्न सन्दिह दीर्घ देह पेलवाति दैवतम्
 श्रान्त ब्भक्त चक्रतीर्त्त हिंश्रुत द्रिंश्रुत गोचरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

59

rātri-śeṣa-saumya-veśa-śāyitārdra-saikatam
 bhinna-sandhi-dīrgha-deha-pelavāti-daivatam
 śrānta-bhakta-cakratīrtha-hiṁśrta-dṛṣṭi-gocaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

After searching for the Lord throughout the night, the exhausted devotees finally found him near Chakratirtha. The Lord's body was a figure of tranquility. His form was elongated, his limbs were stretched and slackened, as he lay relaxed and sleeping on the wet sands. The devotee's tear filled eyes were filled with joy as they gazed upon the delicate and serene figure of their Lord.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

६०

आर्त्तं ब्रूत कन्तं कृष्णं नाम कर्णं हिद्वत्
 लग्नं सन्दिहं सुशृणु देहं सर्वं पूर्वं सम्मतम्
 अर्द्धं बाह्यं ब्रूव कृष्णं केलिं वर्णनातुरम्
 प्रेमं दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

60

ārtta-bhakta-kaṇṭha-kṛṣṇa-nāma-kaṇa-hṛdgatam
 lagna-sandhi-suṣṭhu-deha-sarvva-pūrvva-sammataṁ
 ardha-bāhya-bhāva-kṛṣṇa-keli-varṇanāturam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

As the anxious devotees began to loudly chant the holy names of Krishna, the divine vibration of the kirtan entered the Lord's ears and touched the depths of his heart. The Lord's dislocated joints all came together and he displayed his previous beautiful figure of Sri Gauranga. In a semiconscious state, heavy-hearted in the mood of separation, the Lord began to describe what he had seen while absorbed in divine trance.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Chaitanya-Charitamṛta (Antya, chapter 18)

by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami

(translation by Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)

In the brilliant autumn moonlight, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu mistook the sea for the river Yamuna. Greatly afflicted by separation from Krishna, He ran and dove into the sea and remained unconscious in the water the entire night. In the morning, He was found by His personal devotees. May that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the son of mother Sachi, protect us by His transcendental pastimes.

All glories to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu! All glories to Nityananda Prabhu! All glories to Advaita Acarya! And all glories to all the devotees of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu!

While thus living at Jagannatha Puri, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu floated all day and night in an ocean of separation from Krishna.

During a night of the autumn season when a full moon brightened everything, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu wandered all night long with His devotees.

He walked from garden to garden, seeing the pastimes of Lord Krishna and hearing and reciting songs and verses concerning the rasalila.

He sang and danced in ecstatic love and sometimes imitated the rasa dance in emotional ecstasy.

He sometimes ran here and there in the madness of ecstasy and sometimes fell and rolled on the ground. Sometimes He became completely unconscious.

When He heard Swarup Damodar recite a verse concerning the rasalila or He Himself recited one, He would personally explain it, as He had previously done.

In this way, He explained the meaning of all the verses concerning the rasalila. Sometimes He would be very sad and sometimes very happy.

To explain fully all those verses and all the transformations that took place in the Lord's body would require a very large volume.

So as not to increase the size of this book, I have not written about all the Lord's pastimes, for He performed them every moment of every day for twelve years.

As I have previously indicated, I am describing the mad speeches and bodily transformations of the Lord only in brief.

If Ananta, with His one thousand hoods, tried to describe even one day's pastimes of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, He would find them impossible to describe fully.

If Ganesha, Lord Siva's son and the expert scribe of the demigods, tried for millions of millenniums to fully describe one day of the Lord's pastimes, he would be unable to find their limit.

Even Lord Krishna is struck with wonder at seeing the transformations of ecstasy in His devotees. If Krishna Himself cannot estimate the limits of such emotions, how could others?

Krishna Himself cannot fully understand the conditions, the mode of progress, the happiness and unhappiness, and the moods of ecstatic love of His devotees. He therefore accepts the role of a devotee to taste these emotions fully.

Ecstatic love of Krishna makes Krishna and His devotees dance, and it also dances personally. In this way, all three dance together in one place.

One who wants to describe the transformations of ecstatic love of Krishna is like a dwarf trying to catch the moon in the sky.

As the wind can carry away but a drop of the water in the ocean, a living entity can touch only a particle of the ocean of love of Krishna.

Endless waves arise moment after moment in that ocean of love. How could an insignificant living entity estimate their limits?

Only a person on the level of Swarup Damodar Gosvami can fully know what Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu tastes in His love for Krishna.

When an ordinary living entity describes the pastimes of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he purifies himself by touching one drop of that great ocean.

Thus all the verses about the rasalila dance were recited. Then finally the verse concerning the pastimes in the water was recited.

As an independent leader among elephants enters the water with its female elephants, Krishna, who is transcendental to the Vedic principles of morality, entered the water of the Yamuna with the gopis. His chest had brushed against their breasts, crushing His flower garland and coloring it with red kun'kuma powder. Attracted by the fragrance of that garland, humming bumblebees followed Krishna like celestial beings of Gandharvaloka. In this way, Lord Krishna mitigated the fatigue of the rasa dance.

While thus wandering near the temple of Aitota, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu suddenly saw the sea.

Brightened by the shining light of the moon, the high waves of the sea glittered like the waters of the river Yamuna.

Mistaking the sea for the Yamuna, the Lord ran swiftly and jumped into the water, unseen by the others.

Falling into the sea, He lost consciousness and could not understand where He was. Sometimes He sank beneath the waves, and sometimes He floated above them.

The waves carried Him here and there like a piece of dry wood. Who can understand this dramatic performance by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu?

Keeping the Lord sometimes submerged and sometimes afloat, the waves carried Him toward the Konarka temple.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fully merged in the pastimes Lord Krishna performed with the gopis in the waters of the Yamuna.

Meanwhile, all the devotees, headed by Swarup Damodar, lost sight of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Astonished, they began searching for Him, asking, "Where has the Lord gone?"

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had run off at the speed of the mind. No one could see Him. Thus everyone was puzzled as to His whereabouts.

"Has the Lord gone to the temple of Jagannatha, or has He fallen down in madness in some garden?"

Perhaps He went to the Gundica temple, or to Lake Narendra, or to the Cataka-parvata. Maybe He went to the temple at Konarka.

Talking like this, the devotees wandered here and there looking for the Lord. Finally they came to the shore, accompanied by many others.

While they were searching for the Lord, the night ended, and thus they all decided, "Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has now disappeared."

In separation from the Lord, everyone felt as though he had lost his very life. The devotees concluded that there must have been some mishap. They could not think of anything else.

A relative or intimate friend is always fearful of some injury to his beloved.

When they arrived at the seashore, they conferred among themselves. Then some of them sought out Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu at Cataka-parvata.

Swarup Damodar proceeded east with others, looking for the Lord on the beach or in the water.

Everyone was overwhelmed with moroseness and almost unconscious, but out of ecstatic love they continued to wander here and there, searching for the Lord.

Passing along the beach, they saw a fisherman approaching with his net over his shoulder. Laughing, crying, dancing and singing, he kept repeating the holy name "Hari, Hari."

Seeing the activities of the fisherman, everyone was astonished. Swarup Damodar Gosvami, therefore, asked him for information.

My dear fisherman, he said, "why are you behaving like this? Have you seen someone hereabouts? What is the cause of your behavior? Please tell us."

The fisherman replied, "I have not seen a single person here, but while casting my net in the water, I captured a dead body. I lifted it with great care, thinking it a big fish, but as soon as I saw that it was a corpse, great fear arose in my mind. As I tried to release the net, I touched the body, and as soon as I touched it, a ghost entered my heart. I shivered in fear and shed tears. My voice faltered, and all the hairs on my body stood up. I do not know whether the corpse I found was the ghost of a dead brahman?a or an ordinary man, but as soon as one looks upon it, the ghost enters his body. The body of this ghost is very long, five to seven

cubits. Each of its arms and legs is as much as three cubits long. Its joints are all separated beneath the skin, which is completely slack. No one could see it and remain alive in his body. That ghost has taken the form of a corpse, but He keeps his eyes open. Sometimes He utters the sounds 'gon'gon', and sometimes He remains unconscious. I have seen that ghost directly, and He is haunting me. But if I die, who will take care of my wife and children? The ghost is certainly very difficult to talk about, but I am going to find an exorcist and ask him if he can release me from it. I wander alone at night killing fish in solitary places, but because I remember the hymn to Lord Nrsimha, ghosts do not touch me. This ghost, however, overcomes me with redoubled strength when I chant the Nrsimha mantra. When I even see the form of this ghost, great fear arises in my mind. Do not go near there. I forbid you. If you go, that ghost will catch you all."

Hearing this, Swarup Damodar could understand the full truth of the matter. He spoke sweetly to the fisherman.

I am a famous exorcist, he said, "and I know how to rid you of this ghost." He then chanted some mantras and placed his hand on top of the fisherman's head.

He slapped the fisherman three times and said, "Now the ghost has gone away. Do not be afraid." By saying this, he pacified the fisherman.

The fisherman was affected by ecstatic love, but he was also fearful. He had thus become doubly agitated. Now that his fear had subsided, however, he had become somewhat normal.

Swarup Damodar said to the fisherman, "My dear sir, the person you are thinking is a ghost is not actually a ghost but is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Because of ecstatic love, the Lord fell into the sea, and you have caught Him in your net and rescued Him. Simply touching Him has awakened your dormant love of Krishna, but because you thought Him a ghost, you were very much afraid of Him."

Now that your fear has gone and your mind is peaceful, please show me where He is.

The fisherman replied, "I have seen the Lord many times, but this is not He. This

body is very much deformed."

Swarup Damodar said, "The Lord's body becomes transformed in His love for God. Sometimes the joints of His bones separate, and His body becomes very much elongated."

Hearing this, the fisherman became very happy. He brought all the devotees with him and showed them Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The Lord was lying on the ground, His body elongated and bleached white by the water. He was covered from head to foot with sand.

The Lord's body was stretched, and His skin was slack and hanging loose. To lift Him and take Him the long distance home would have been impossible.

The devotees removed His wet undergarment and replaced it with a dry one. Then, laying the Lord on an outer cloth, they cleaned the sand from His body.

They all performed sankirtana, loudly chanting the holy name of Krishna into the Lord's ear.

After some time the sound of the holy name entered the ear of the Lord, who immediately got up, making a great noise.

As soon as He got up, His bones assumed their proper places. With halfexternal consciousness, the Lord looked here and there.

The Lord remained in one of three different states of consciousness at all times: internal, external and halfexternal.

When the Lord was deeply absorbed in internal consciousness but He nevertheless exhibited some external consciousness, devotees called His condition ardhabahya, or halfexternal consciousness.

In this half-external consciousness, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu talked like a madman. The devotees could distinctly hear Him speaking to the sky.

Seeing the river Yamuna, He said, "I went to Vrindaban. There I saw the son of Nanda Maharaj performing His sporting pastimes in the water. Lord Krishna was in the water of the Yamuna in the company of the gopis, headed by Srimati Radharani. They were performing pastimes in a great sporting manner. I saw this pastime as I stood on the bank of the Yamuna in the company of the gopis. One gopi was showing some other gopis the pastimes of Radha and Krishna in the water. All the gopis entrusted their silken garments and ornaments to the care of their friends and then put on fine white cloth. Lord Krishna, taking His beloved gopis with Him, bathed and performed very nice pastimes in the water of the Yamuna. My dear friends, just see Lord Krishna's sporting pastimes in the water! Krishna's restless palms resemble lotus flowers. He is just like the chief of mad elephants, and the gopis who accompany Him are like sheelephants."

"The sporting pastimes in the water began, and everyone started splashing water back and forth. In the tumultuous showers of water, no one could be certain which party was winning and which was losing. This sporting water fight increased unlimitedly. The gopis were like steady streaks of lightning, and Krishna resembled a blackish cloud. The lightning began sprinkling water upon the cloud, and the cloud upon the lightning. Like thirsty cataka birds, the eyes of the gopis joyously drank the nectarean water from the cloud."

"As the fight began, they splashed water on one another. Then they fought hand to hand, then face to face, then chest to chest, teeth to teeth and finally nail to nail. Thousands of hands splashed water, and the gopis saw Krishna with thousands of eyes. With thousands of legs they came near Him, and they kissed Him with thousands of faces. Thousands of bodies embraced Him. The gopis heard His joking words with thousands of ears. Krishna forcibly swept Radharani away and took Her into water up to Her neck. Then He released Her where the water was very deep. She grasped Krishna's neck, however, and floated on the water like a lotus flower plucked by the trunk of an elephant. Krishna expanded Himself into as many forms as there were gopis and then took away all the garments that covered them. The water of the river Yamuna was crystal clear, and Krishna saw the glittering bodies of the gopis in great happiness."

"The lotus stems were friends of the gopis and therefore helped them by offering them lotus leaves. The lotuses pushed their large, round leaves over the surface of the water with their hands, the waves of the Yamuna, to cover the gopis' bodies.

Some gopis undid their hair and kept it in front of them as dresses to cover the lower portions of their bodies and used their hands as bodices to cover their breasts."

"Then Krishna quarreled with Radharani, and all the gopis hid themselves in a cluster of white lotus flowers. They submerged their bodies up to their necks in the water. Only their faces floated above the surface, and the faces were indistinguishable from the lotuses. In the absence of the other gopis, Lord Krishna behaved with Srimati Radharani as freely as He desired. When the gopis began searching for Krishna, Srimati Radharani, being of very fine intelligence and thus knowing the situation of Her friends, immediately mingled in their midst. Many white lotus flowers were floating in the water, and as many bluish lotus flowers came nearby. As they came close together, the white and blue lotuses collided and began fighting with one another. The gopis on the bank of the Yamuna watched with great amusement. When the raised breasts of the gopis, which resembled the globelike bodies of cakravaka birds, emerged from the water in separate couples, the bluish lotuses of Krishna's hands rose to cover them. The hands of the gopis, which resembled red lotus flowers, arose from the water in pairs to obstruct the bluish flowers. The blue lotuses tried to plunder the white cakravaka birds, and the red lotuses tried to protect them. Thus there was a fight between the two. Blue and red lotus flowers are unconscious objects, whereas cakravakas are conscious and alive. Nevertheless, in ecstatic love, the blue lotuses began to taste the cakravakas. This is a reversal of their natural behavior, but in Lord Krishna's kingdom such reversals are a principle of His pastimes. The blue lotuses are friends of the sungod, and though they all live together, the blue lotuses plunder the cakravakas. The red lotuses, however, blossom at night and are therefore strangers or enemies to the cakravakas. Yet in Krishna's pastimes the red lotuses, which are the hands of the gopis, protect their cakravaka breasts. This is a metaphor of contradiction."

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu continued, "In His pastimes, Krishna displayed the two ornaments of hyperbole and reverse analogy. Tasting them brought gladness to My mind and fully satisfied My ears and eyes. After performing such wonderful pastimes, Lord Sri Krishna went up on the shore of the Yamuna River, taking with Him all His beloved gopis. Then the gopis on the riverbank rendered service by massaging Krishna and the other gopis with scented oil and smearing paste of amalaki fruit on their bodies. Then they all bathed again, and after

putting on dry clothing, they went to a small jeweled house, where the gopi Vrinda arranged to dress them in forest clothing by decorating them with fragrant flowers, green leaves and all kinds of other ornaments. In Vrindaban, the trees and creepers are wonderful because throughout the entire year they produce all kinds of fruits and flowers. The gopis and maidservants in the bowers of Vrindaban picked these fruits and flowers and brought them before Radha and Krishna. The gopis peeled all the fruits and placed them together on large plates on a platform in the jeweled cottage. They arranged the fruit in orderly rows for eating, and in front of it they made a place to sit. Among the fruits were many varieties of coconuts and mangoes, bananas, berries, jackfruits, dates, tangerines, oranges, blackberries, santaras, grapes, almonds and all kinds of dried fruit. There were cantaloupes, ksirikas, palm fruits, kes'uras, water fruits, lotus fruits, bel, pilus, pomegranates and many others. Some of them are variously known in different places, but in Vrindaban all of them are always available in so many thousands of varieties that no one can fully describe them. At home Srimati Radharani had made various types of sweetmeats from milk and sugar, such as gan'gajala, amrtakeli, piyusagranthi, karpurakeli, sarapuri, amrti, padmacini and khanda-ksirisara-vrksa. She had then brought them all for Krishna. When Krishna saw the very nice arrangement of food, He happily sat down and had a forest picnic. Then, after Srimati Radharani and Her gopi friends partook of the remnants, Radha and Krishna lay down together in the jeweled house. Some of the gopis fanned Radha and Krishna, others massaged Their feet, and some fed Them betel leaves to chew. When Radha and Krishna fell asleep, all the gopis also lay down. When I saw this, My mind was very happy. Suddenly, all of you created a great tumult and picked Me up and brought Me back here. Where now is the river Yamuna? Where is Vrindaban? Where are Krishna and the gopis? You have broken My happy dream!"

Speaking in this way, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fully returned to external consciousness. Seeing Swarup Damodar Gosvami, the Lord questioned him.

Why have you brought Me here? He asked. Then Swarup Damodar answered Him.

You mistook the sea for the Yamuna River, he said, "and You jumped into it. You have been carried this far by the waves of the sea.

"This fisherman caught You in his net and rescued You from the water. Because of Your touch, he is now mad with ecstatic love for Krishna.

Throughout the night, we all walked about in search of You. After hearing from this fisherman, we came here and found You."

"While apparently unconscious, You witnessed the pastimes in Vrindaban, but when we saw You unconscious, we suffered great agony in our minds.

When we chanted the holy name of Krishna, however, You came to semiconsciousness, and we have all been hearing You speak like a madman."

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "In My dream I went to Vrindaban, where I saw Lord Krishna perform the rasa dance with all the gopis.

After sporting in the water, Krishna enjoyed a picnic. I can understand that after seeing this I must certainly have talked like a madman.

Thereafter, Swarup Damodar Gosvami had Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu bathe in the sea, and then he very happily brought Him back home.

Thus I have described the incident of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's falling into the ocean. Anyone who listens to this pastime will certainly attain shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Praying at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunatha, always desiring their mercy, I, Krishnadasa, narrate Sri Chaitanyacaritamṛta, following in their footsteps.

६१

यामुनाम्बु क्रिश्ण रादिकालि केलि मन्दलम्
 व्यक्त गुप्त द्विप्त त्रिप्त ब्रह्मणि मादनाकुलम्
 गूढह दिव्य मर्म मोद मूर्च्छना चमत्करम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

61

yāmunāmbu-kṛṣṇa-rādhikāli-keli-maṇḍalam
 vyakta-gupta-dvīpta-trīpta-bhaṅgi-mādanākulam
 gūḍha-divya-marmma-moda-mūrcchanā-camatkaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

In the sacred waters of the Yamuna at Vrindabana, Lord Krishna and Srimati Radhika, along with their dearmost cowherd maiden friends, enjoy beautiful and varied water-sport pastimes. These divine pastimes are sometimes revealed, sometimes hidden, sometimes brilliant, and sometimes harmonious. The pastimes of the Lord in different moods, with loving expressions of relationship, create different types of divine hankering for the devotees. The sweet song of this most confidential spiritual treasure that astounds the entire universe was distributed by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sambandha, abhideya, prayojana

Srila Govinda Maharaj: Who is Srila Raghunath Das Goswami's guru, who is it really?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: It is a complicated case. By the will of God it is transferred. When he was a married man himself, Raghunatha Das Goswami took *diksa* from Yadunandana Acharya, a *grhasta* (married man). Then he went to Mahaprabhu and Mahaprabhu handed him over to Swarup Damodar. We may take Yadunandana as an ordinary *siksa guru*, *vartmapradarsaka guru*. The beginner, the canvasser. Something like a *ritvik* representative. Not the guru proper. But a representative has come as Yadunandana and has helped Das

Goswami in the right way. Otherwise Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami could not be attracted by the charming personality of Mahaprabhu.

Raghunatha Das Goswami approached Mahaprabhu, and Mahaprabhu himself we may take as Radharani. He is Krishna in the garb of Radharani. Raghunatha Das Goswami came there to meet Mahaprabhu in Puri, and Radharani (Mahaprabhu) placed him under the charge of Swarup Damodar, Lalitadevi. He handed him over to Lalita devi.

But we trace that Das Goswami's tendency is always towards Mahaprabhu. Although Mahaprabhu deputed Swarup Damodar as his guru, again Das Goswami approached Mahaprabhu and told him "I can't understand why you have taken me, snatched me from my family. Give definite directions to me." Then Mahaprabhu told him something in a nutshell. "Do this, and don't do this." He told Das Goswami, "What I don't know, Swarup Damodar knows it for certain, elaborately. So, I have rightly deputed him to train you on my behalf." So again he put Das Goswami in the hands of Swarup Damodar. Then of course Das Goswami went on with his *bhajana* in a very stern manner.

After the disappearance of Mahaprabhu, Das Goswami left there, thinking, "I would like to have a view of Vrindavan and then I will try to finish my life. No more prospect is to be seen in my future life." But when he came to Vrindavan he found Mahaprabhu present there in Rupa and Sanatan. His plans disappeared. "Mahaprabhu is here!"

He was especially attracted to Rupa Goswami. His internal connection, his sympathetic chord, he found with Rupa. Thereby we are taught that, passing through so many ups and downs in the life of a *sadhaka*, he at last comes to Rupa and there he thinks that he has reached the desired station. Mahaprabhu named this the Rupanuga Sampradaya. What is this Rupanuga sampradaya? The first disciple of Mahaprabhu is Rupa Goswami - although Rupa Goswami took his formal initiation from Sanatan Goswami. But Mahaprabhu met Rupa first, and secondly he met Sanatan. So, Rupa-Sanatan, and not Sanatan-Rupa.

Sanatan is the elder. But we are saying "Rupa-Sanatan", because the first recognition by Mahaprabhu was of Rupa. Then Sanatan next. So, "Rupa-Sanatan".

Now, what is the real meaning of Rupa Sampradaya? You are to mark it very attentively. *madhura rasa* is the total *rasa* and the most intense of all *rasas*. It is all accommodating. Twenty four hours engagement of service with Krishna is only possible in *madhura rasa*. For there is a possibility of reaction, that tendency of seeking leisure, tiredness, in all other *rasas*, even *vatsalya rasa*. Sometimes the father or the mother may think, "I am too much tired, I shall do the arrangement of feeling a little after." But in *madhura rasa* there is no reaction.

The difference between Rupa Manjari and Lalita and the *sakhis* - these are of course things of the very higher order - we should not have the audacity to enter into these subtle points - still, when that question has come to me about Raghunatha Das, then by divine arrangement I am going to say that when Radha Govinda are alone in union, the *sakhis* of the higher order do not approach that place but the *manjaris* can go. The junior *sevakas*, they can go to perform any service necessary there, because due to their lesser age they are allowed. And the higher friends of Radharani keep at some respectable distance. So when Radha-Govinda are alone in union the highest quality of *rasa* is to be found in their *lila* and that is approachable for the juniors. That, is for the *manjaris*, not for the *sakhis*.

So the highest attainment is to be located in Rupa, the leader of that group. That junior group who has got the special advantage of the special service in that stage. So, Rupanuga Sampradaya.

Wherever we are we shall have to accept that that is the acme of our fulfillment. That point. And for Das Goswami there was already a formal guru. First we may be attracted by the highest peak of the Himalayas. Then when approaching, we see so many other beautiful peaks. So we are attracted by Krishna in general, then from Krishna, we come to a proper Vaisnava, a proper location according to the necessity of my innate nature. In this way, from Mahaprabhu to Swarup Damodar, and with permission of Lalita he comes to Rupa, and the point of Rupa, that is the place of our highest attainment. And that has been shown in the *lila* of Das Goswami Prabhu.

Das Goswami has been accepted as the Acharya of *Prayojana tattva*. What is our highest necessity, that is in his hand. Das Goswami is the *proyोजना acharya*. But the whole thing must be approached with the mood of divinity. Where there is the plane of dedication and nothing of enjoyment, no spirit of pleasure seeking or

enjoyment, when there is service to the divinity to the extreme, it reaches the zenith there with Sri Rupa Manjari Pada.

The Acharya of *sambandha* (knowledge of the divine relationship to Sri Krishna), we are told, is Sanatan Goswami. He has given us a graphic description of the environment of the spiritual world. "Who am I?" Sanatan Goswami put this question to Mahaprabhu and Mahaprabhu gradually gave the description of everything, in detail. "What is what? Who are you?" - *jivera swarup hoi, krsnera nitya das*. In a nutshell, in one word, you are the slave to Krishna.

It is not a very easy thing to get the service Krishna. So, "*jivera swarup hoy*". "*Nitya das*" means "born slave, born servant." That is slave. That was the clarion call in a high voice that was declared first, "*jivera swarup hoy*," with such great pride, magnanimous pride. Such a dignified position the jiva soul has got. But now in the garb of a master he is the slave of *maya*, of *ajnana*, of ignorance; but his real position, his innate position, is that Krishna has got his Autocratic power over the jiva soul. So fortunate they are. So very fortunate. Such a close connection with Krishna the jiva has got in an innate stage. "*Jivera swarup hoi krsnera nitya das krsnera tatastha shakti, bheda bheda prakash*". But at present it is not found in the soul. It is in his prospect that he is such, but in his present position the soul comes from the line of demarcation, the marginal potency, and so his entrance into *maya* has been possible. *krsnera tatasta sakti beda beda prakash*. Adaptability towards both sides is within the soul. *tatastha sakti bheda bheda prakash*, something common and something different. In this way, Mahaprabhu began teaching Sanatan Goswami. And Sanatan Goswami put question after question and he got Mahaprabhu's answers. Then he in turn gave out the conception about the environment and the position of the jiva soul and Bhagavan. He taught "Who is who". This is *sambandha*.

Rupa Goswami generally deals with *abhidheya*, the means to the end. How to attain our desired position? That is *abhidheya*. What comes naturally from the Veda, from the *srauta* (revealed scriptures), what flows naturally: "what do you want us to do, oh Lord?" That is *abidheya*. What is the natural implication of the *sruti* (message of the scriptures) that has been given to us by Krishna? That is *abidheya*. So Sri Rupa Goswami is the *abidheya acharya*, teaching the means to the end, *sadhana*. Rupa Goswami has elaborately given the way forward and described how to get there. A step by step process.

*adau sraddha tatah sadhu-sango' tha bhajana-kriya
tato' nartha-nivrttih syat tato nistha rucis tatah
athasaktis tato bhavas tatah premabhyudancati
sadhakanam ayam premnah pradurbhave bhavet kramah*

"In the beginning there must be faith. Then one becomes interested in associating with pure devotees. Thereafter one is initiated by the spiritual master and executes the regulative principles under his orders. Thus one is freed from all unwanted habits and becomes firmly fixed in devotional service. Thereafter, one develops taste and then attachment. This is the way of sadhana-bhakti, the execution of devotional service according to the regulative principles. Gradually spiritual emotions manifest and intensify, then finally there is an awakening of divine love. This is the gradual development of love of Godhead."
(B-r-s, 1.4.15-16)

The gradual process is to take us to enter into our home. *Prema sneha mana pranaya raga anuraga bhava mahabhava*. This has been graphically described by Rupa Goswami, in detail: "This is the way and in this plane do this, and then the next step is this, and then the next step is this, and in this way, you can come to the highest". That has been given by Rupa Goswami. The means to the end. How to come to the desired goal.

And *prayojana-tattva* has been given by Das Goswami because he has clearly and boldly asserted that our necessity is not so much with Krishna as with His highest servitor, Radharani. Because generally we come from *tatasta sakti* and we have got a limited prospect. And our limited prospect to its highest degree will take us to the highest servitor, the eternal servitor in *madhura rasa*, Srimate Radharani. Das Goswami declared boldly, "Krishna, I do not want you if I do not find Radharani there. I want rather to be in the service of Radharani".

The devotee is feeling, "Oh Krishna, I cannot really give you the supply of the highest type of service. So, what is the necessity of going in the front rank? I was wandering in the street just the other day, and I have got such audacity that I will come nearest to you, and venture to render service to You? No! There are permanent servitors there in your abode and how high they are! And what a high quality service they are rendering! I must admit that, if I am really liberated and really I am graced. I must understand my real position. I must not cross the original and higher servitors. That will be a fault in me and that will be suicidal.

That will defeat its own object. So, my highest goal will be to help the real and eternal servitor who is taking that grave charge of serving you in a high way. That is the right thing for me. And also our necessity is that we are in the serving group. So the serving master is our group-leader. Naturally I must accomodate my aspirations with the serving leader. I am not hankering after Your direct service but the service of the leader servitor. I must try to earn the confidence of her or him who is the leader. Then if I do this I am seeking and searching for your proper service, Krishna. Otherwise, it would be self-seeking in some form or other (selfishness)."

So, Das Goswami boldly declared that Radha-dasyam is the highest end, highest attainment. That should be our highest end, the summum bonnum. Radhadasyam. In Krishna's abode there is Radha-dasyam, or Yasoda-dasyam in Vatsalya rasa, or Nanda-dasya. The leader of every camp, the highest leader, our real concern should be to be serving them. Our attention should be there. That is what Das Goswami told. And then gradually we come to Rupa, the leader of the juniors. This has been clearly explained in Das Goswami's sloka.

*asa-bharair amrta-sindhu-mayaih kathancit
kalo mayati-gamitah kila sampratam hi
tvam cet krpam mayi vidhasyasi naiva kim me
pranair vrajena ca varoru bakarinapi*

For me somehow the present moment is flooded by a nectar ocean of many hopes. If You do not give Your mercy, then of what use to me are this life, the land of Vraja, and Sri Krishna, the enemy of Baka?
(Sri Vilapa-kusumanjali, verse 102)

When Prabhupada (Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami) used to explain this stanza, this sloka, his figure was transformed into something like a phantom.

*asa-bharair amrta-sindhu-mayaih kathancit
kalo mayati-gamitah kila sampratam hi
tvam cet krpam mayi vidhasyasi naiva kim me
pranair vrajena ca varoru bakarinapi.*

In this stanza Das Goswami is appealing to Radharani, "For a long time I am cherishing the hope, this sweetest hope, *amrta-sindhu-mayaih*, from faraway I am

fostering such a hope, that I shall come to serve you, Radharani. I am hoping I shall get the privilege of serving you. Anyhow, I am dragging myself forward with this infinite and sweetest hope, that I shall get the chance of serving you. That I shall get the service of your divine feet. But now, I think I have come to the last verge of my hope. No longer can I contain myself. No longer can I live. I cannot breathe any more. The last moment or last circumference of my hope, I have reached, my master. If you won't be satisfied with me and accept me then I can no longer stand or sustain my life. Anyhow, somehow, I have dragged myself to the last moment of my life. I have come to the final conclusion, that I feel this way: of what use is this Vraja, what is the use of my life, if I cannot reach this, my sweetest goal, my dream? What is the use of my life any further? Dragging, dragging, dragging on my life. What shall I do with this great Vraja dham of such a renowned acquaintance? Oh beautiful feet! Even what should I do with Krishna? I don't want them. The whole concentration of my bhajan is this. You, Oh Srimate Radharani, will serve Krishna. You have got that capacity, it is natural. And if I serve you, if I utilize myself to serve you so that by service, through you my, the service may pass to Krishna, then that will be the highest attainment of my fortune." Das Goswami declared it. Das Goswami. And still even now, that is the highest point of our achievement for the whole Gaudiya Sampradaya. Das Goswami is the Proyojana Acharya.

६२

आस्य गृहर्हनादि चातकाद्रि सिन्धु लीलनम्
 ब्रक्त मर्म ब्रदि तीव्र दुःख सौख्य खेलनम्
 अत्यचिन्त्य दिव्य वैभवाश्रितैक शङ्करम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् एव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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āśya-gharṣaṇādi-cātakādrī-sindhu-līlanam
 bhakta-marmma-bhedi-tīvra-duḥkha-saukya-khēlanam
 atyacintya-divya-vaibhavāśritaika-śaṅkaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Seeing the Chataka hill, the Lord remembered Govardhana hill. Intolerable feelings of separation overwhelmed him. The Lord would fall to the earth and begin to rub his beautiful face on the ground. When Sri Gauranga remembered the water-sport pastimes of Lord Krishna he jumped into the ocean and exhibited the symptoms of someone intoxicated by love. By performing these pastimes the Lord astounded the devotees and inundated their hearts with waves from the grand ocean of love of Krishna. Those waves of desperate love were filled with both transcendental anxiety and joy. The waves of Sri Gauranga's feelings rose and fell upon the receptive shore of the devotee's hearts. Such inconceivable auspiciousness was bestowed only upon the Lord's most surrendered associates. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

६३

श्रोत्र नेत्र गत्यतीत बोद्ध रोदिहताद्भुतम्
 प्रेम लब्ध्वा ब्रह्म सिद्धं चेतना चमत्कृतम्
 ब्रह्म शम्भु वेद तन्त्र प्रिय सत्य सुन्दरम्
 प्रेम दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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śrotra-netra-gatyatīta-bodha-rodhitādbhutam
 prema-labhya-bhāva-siddha-cetanā-camatkṛtam
 brahma-śambhu-veda-tantra-mṛgya-satya-sundaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the Divine Person, Purusottama. He is the Lord himself. He exists forever in his own spiritual domain eternally manifest in the dimension of spirit, far above the perception of people with worldly minds. The thoughts of people of the world are influenced by their experiences in the material world. Living beings develop different understandings about reality on the basis of knowledge they acquire through sense perceptions (experiences of the objective world realized through the sense of smell, taste, touch, sight, sound and thought). But Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is God and he cannot be known through empirical knowledge about the material world, since Sri Chaitanya is always existing beyond the material world, even when he is present in the world. Sri Chaitanya cannot be understood by someone who chooses to think of him as a mortal man. Mahaprabhu is more than a man. He arrests and halts all intellectual endeavors to know him by the processes of logic and reasoning. Being situated in his own spiritual realm he remains a mystery even for the sages - sages also are unable to fully understand him. Sri Chaitanya astonishes even the liberated mystics who are fixed in the path of divine realization. The revealed scriptures (*veda*) spoken by Lord Brahma and the literatures spoken Lord Shiva (*tantra*) are simply searching after Sri Gaurasundara (*satyam shivam sundaram*). Indeed Brahma and Shiva, in their incarnations as Haridas and Sri Advaita, also say they are astonished when they see the pastimes of Sri Chaitanya.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

**Gauranga is Krishna and Sri Radha combined
by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj**

Disciple: Srila Guru Maharaj, I have heard that Krishna is doing Gaura-seva. Is that right?

Srila Sridhar Maharaj: Krishna is serving Gauranga? Krishna is serving Gauranga? Yes we can think that Krishna is charmed by his own parallel existence of Gauranga. He is charmed because Gauranga means Krishna and Radha. Gauranga is combination of Radha and Krishna, so that is more. And Gauranga is prepared to distribute the Krishna-prema to one and all. Extending the market of the sale, extending the market for the distribution of divine love. Magnanimous Krishna. When Krishna comes in the mood of Radha, both combined, comes to distribute their inner wealth to one and all to the public for their benefit, that Krishna is Gauranga; not only Krishna, Krishna in the mood of Radha engaged in the distribution of his own wealth to the outside people. So for us Krishna is more valuable when He is Gauranga because there we get our heart's satisfaction. And in that Gauranga is higher than Krishna. Gaura-lila. Krishna engaged in distributing Himself causelessly to the others. That is higher for us. And independent of our thinking because both combined Radha-Krishna.

So they are one. In Vrindavan-lila they became two, divided. And again in Gaura-lila they are both combined. Eternal, always existing, in two moods, one combined and one different. Half and half. For their lila, pastimes. One thing divided, then the whole comes into one and becomes Gauranga, not brahma (nirvisesh brahma). According to the jnanis the whole (sakti-saktiman), the potency and the owner of the potency combined, the jnanis say, when combined then it is non-differentiated brahma. But to us that is not non-differentiated brahma, that (whole) becomes Gauranga searching Himself - sahajana prayojana vivarjana. When one Radha-Krishna the potency and the owner of the potency combine together in one whole absolute then He is searching Himself. He is feeling Himself, searching Himself, and in that way He is distributing Himself to others. In prema dham deva stotram I have got:
*atma-siddha-savalila-purna-sakhya-laksanam
 svanubhava-matta-nrtya-kirttanatma-vantanam*

The sign of the absolute perfect being, the full Absolute, will be this, that He is dancing because He is overjoyed in his inner satisfaction. He is satisfied with Himself, and He has nothing to search for, to find His satisfaction outside, and He will dance. The dancing attitude is showing that He is full in Himself. And the kirttan, the chanting, that is His distributing that joy to others. That we find in Gauranga. His dancing, that is because He is full in Himself, and the kirttan, the chanting - He is distributing that joy. This is self-evident and this is the sign of the fullest source of the highest absolute, kirttanadvayaika, and that is mentioned in one stanza in prema dhama deva stotram, purna sakha laksanam. The satisfaction, the anandam, ecstasy, in its fullest conception, will have such sign, such symptom - what? That He is dancing in joy with happiness arising within Himself. He is full in Himself and He is chanting, He is giving Himself out to the environment. That should be the highest ideal of the absolute happiness. And that we find in Gauranga. Radha Krishna. Do you follow?

I tried to express this idea in that stanza in Prema Dhama Deva Stotram, and Svarupa Damodara says:

radha krishna pranaya vikriti hladini sakti
CC1.1.5

Who is Radharani? She is the love of Krishna in a particular form. The object of love of Krishna. So there one is Krishna, and the love the affection for Krishna is appearing in a particular form (Sri Radha). So it belongs together. Krishna is one, one. But still for the pastimes in Dvarapa-yuga They became divided in Vrindavan-lila and became two parties (Radha and Krishna), one predominating (Krishna) and that predominated moiety (Sri Radha). They parted and display in distinct forms with their own paraphernalia and began their pastimes in different way, their play. And again they come together, combine together, and become Gauranga. And He began to distribute Himself to the public. He is saying, "Automatically by nature, come take me, I am yours". He comes in the mood of Radharani. Their own common treasure they began to loot. They allowed themselves to be looted. Both the parties, they began to be looted by the public. Take this. Their treasure, they allowed their treasure to be looted. Both combined ... combined give affection... coming as Gauranga. So Gauranga is our greater shelter.

yatha yatha gaura padaravinde
vindeta bhaktim kṛta punya-rasih

*tatha tathotsarpati hr̥dy akasmat
radha padambhoja sudhambhurasih*

"As much as you surrender to the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga, you'll find yourself safely situated in the service of Radha-Govinda. Don't try to approach Radha-Govinda directly; if you do, there may be some difficulty. But the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga will take you there safely."

If you can secure a card admission card from Gauranga, you will find you are automatically that you are present in the harem of Krishna. You are in the group of Radharani. So He is increasing the circle Himself. Admission card is issued from here. And you are instructed in the confidential circle of service there. So Nityananda Prabhu tried His best: "Anyhow you can, connect yourself with Gauranga. Oh fallen souls, my friends, connect yourself with Gauranga. It is very easy for you. For fallen souls it is very easy to make connection with Gauranga, and then automatically everything will come unexpectedly to you, for your inner heart's satisfaction. Any way you can, connect yourself!" From door to door he came past. "Have a connection with Gauranga, have a connection with Gauranga and you will be richest of the rich." Door to door Nityananda Prabhu wandered.

*bhaja gauranga kaha gauranga laha gaurang-anama
yei jana gauranga bhaje, sei amara pran*

He began to roll on the doorstep of the customers, 'Take Gauranga take Gauranga' with tears in his eyes, that golden body began to roll on the door of so many customers. Accept Gauranga. Take Gauranga. You don't know what is passing away from your door, accept Gauranga. This is Nityananda.

nitaiyer karuna habe braje radha krishna pabe

Everything will be in your fist. Try to have the grace of Nityananda. He can give Gauranga. And if you get Gauranga you have got everything. The consent of both the parties, Radha-Krishna. Not only the sound of this message we must receive but also the meaning. The meaning, thereby we are to follow, try to follow. What is meant by these sounds.

From the external side not to consider this statement of Nityananda Prabhu, but the substance within the statement, we are to search for that. We are to search for the meaning. The real meaning, the mark, what does it mean? The substance,

brahma jijnasa and krishnanusandhana: search for reality the beautiful. Dive deep. Dive. Die to Live, not only here in the surface of your sensual experience, you are to dive, dive deep in to the reality.

adau sraddha tathau sadhu sanga bhajana kriya anartha nivritti nistha ruci asakti bhava, then *prema*. So many stages we are to pass through to dive deep into the reality. So many superficial covers, so many stages of our mental covers we are to pass through and then we are to come in touch of the reality. Die to live. So our state and our progress, our progressive state, that was the search; that we are to pass through, all these covers. And then enter into the substantial world.

Adau sraddha, first faith; then sadhu sanga, then keeping company with those arjuns, sadhu sanga. bhajana kriya then as they advise us to go and discharge those duties. Cultivation culture to hear to speak to receive to distribute and so many others, recollection and serving attitude, then anartha nivritti the ulterior demands of our superficial nature they will disappear, they will disappear. Then nistha, a continuous aspiration for Krishna for the inner substance. Continuous without any interruption by any superficial demand, nistha, ruci then taste will be created for that. Before that the taste cannot be relied on. But when after continuous attempt for the truth the taste will come that is reliable genuine taste. Then that will increase into asakti, when we can't tolerate any separation from that taste of particular, that truth, asakti. Then bhava, superior? connection with reality. Then prema, when we enter into the reality, and then the positive development: snehaman pramoya radha kunda bhava mahabhaya

Positive participation into reality, we create so many things in our minds. The process of positive progress is there. It is not imagination but the process of elimination. The progressive path involves elimination and acceptance. It is there. Then what is real to us at present, the sense experience world, that world will evaporate and we shall find ourselves in the midst of the inner world, like a yogi, like a deep scientific scholar engaged in research for getting knowledge about the world. But that is very meagre example more deep and interest we will find there. Rather it is like the forgetfulness of the scholar who becomes totally absorbed in his study.

We are living in the covering over the surface (the superficial layer that covers reality). The world we are living in, we are experiencing misleading things, because we are living only in the (superficial) cover. But what is the inner

substance of reality we do not care to know, when we are absorbed in illusion. And that reality, we are to go towards reality. Here, it is the cover floating on our consciousness. But leaving the cover we shall try to enter into deep consciousness. A consciousness! You leave the experience of this world of sense experience, thinking "I don't like this, I want to go deeper'. We are to enter into our own consciousness. Reality, it is a part of our own consciousness. It is a part of the whole consciousness. So we are to tackle the extensive consciousness and we are a part of that. Subjective exploitation, not in the objective side - exploiting nature.

Subjective consciousness: we shall have to enter into the causal truth. Gradually we shall find these things. The source of knowledge we are to tackle. We are to enter into the fountain from where the water is oozing. Water is coming outside through the fountain. We are to enter into the fountain to understand what type of water it is, and how it is flowing. In what way. Enter into the source of knowledge to find out wherefrom it comes. Against the current that is flowing towards material life, we are to move against that current. And what is the product of the current just floating on our senses? That feeling we feel on the surface with our senses is reactionary (for every action there is a reaction). So we are to enter into the source to have proper exploitation with the help of the agents there.

Atma, paramatma then bhagavan conception - bhajaniya. Ultimately we shall find that we are to serve the wonderful substance of ecstasy, and if we can engage ourselves in slavery to that Higher Reality, we shall find our fortune is fulfilled. Such high high kind of pleasure is there, satisfaction is there. Anyhow, neglectfully disconnecting with the material life and connecting with the Higher world, if we get with that then we shall think all our fulfillment, our final fulfillment, we have got. A slight connection of that treasure, the source of all knowledge and all ecstasy, will be for our benefit. Subjective enquiry, conscious enquiry, going against the mundane current, is our path. We shall have to go forward.

६४

विप्र शूद्र विज्ज मूर्ख यावनादि नामदम्
 वित्त विक्रमोच्च नीच सज्जनैक सम्पदम्
 स्त्री पुमादि निर्व्विवाद सार्व्ववादिकोद्दहरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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vipra-śūdra-vijñā-mūrkhā-yāvanādi-nāmadam
 vitta-vikramocca-nīca-sajjanaika-sampadam
 strī-pumādi-nirvvivāda-sārvvavādikoddharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

By freely distributing the holy name of Krishna, Sri Gaurangadeva purified the scholarly priestly class (*brahmanas*), the merchants and laborers and even the cow killing yavanas and other non-Aryans. The Lord alone is the embodiment of the greatest wealth for the rogues and honest men, the rich and poor, the aristocratic and low-born. He is unanimously glorified by all who received his mercy, both male and female alike, as the saviour of all beings in the spiritual and material universes.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Chanting the Holy Name by Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaj

For our spiritual life, we must have humility and tolerance and always be prepared to give honour to others. With these three qualities of humility, tolerance and giving honour to others, if you always try to chant the Holy Name you must be benefited.

It is the Lord, Mahaprabhu Himself, who has given the Name. He came to this world with his associates the panca tattva: Sri Krishna Chaitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhara and Srivas.

The associates of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are always bestowing mercy

everywhere. The associates like Guru Maharaj (Srila B R Sridhar Maharaj) and Swami Maharaj (Srila A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad) and the great Acharyyas such as Srila Saraswati Thakur are displaying their mercy to the conditioned souls in this world, and we have much hope.

You cannot deny or refuse to chant the Holy Name of the Lord, or God, or Allah. In every religion they are doing that. In all religions they are chanting their Lord's Name.

5000 years ago the scriptures of the Veda were composed by Vedavyasa. Before then everything was kept not in a written form but in the form of mantram (poems that memorized). This knowledge was passed on from one generation to the next in the form of sruti mantram.

But later, 5000 years ago when the Kali Yuga age began, and when people's memory was weaker and lifespan was shorter, Vyasadev appeared and composed the Veda mantra, Vedanta, Upanishad etc. for us. It was 5000 years ago that the age of Kali began.

This is history. And still in India the scriptures written by Veda-Vyasa are respected by the Rishis (sages) and Munis (silent meditationists) - the research scholars who are searching for the Ultimate Reality.

And everywhere this process of chanting the Names of your Lord is given to us. If you chant properly the Name of your Lord then He will be merciful to you in this age of Kali.

There are so many faults in this age of Kali. But in this time there is one extremely good quality of the age: if you chant without offense the Holy Name of your Lord you must get liberation. There is no doubt. And after liberation you will stand on your own feet. You will live in that plane where you will stand up and do service.

You will get everything , in service to your Lord. All types of relation will be possible with your Lord, as is appropriate for you: santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhura. Five kinds of relationship with your Lord you must get through this chanting of the Hare Krishna Mahamantra.

The unlimited glories of the Mahamantra are chanted by the Agastya Rishi ,
chanted by Anantadev, chanted by Brahma. All the scriptures are chanting the
glories of the Holy Name Mahaprabhu Himself said:

"I am very unfortunate for I cannot properly chant the Holy Name"

And what is that proper chanting process: ten kinds of offense must be avoided.
But with affection, with love, sincerity and faith, if we try and chant this Holy
Name then we must be benefited. This is the teaching of Sri Chaitanya
Mahaprabhu.

Whoever has got that teaching from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he or she must
promise to proceed in this way. To not give offense to others and to the Holy
Name.

As much as possible we should do like that. Of course, I know we are all in the
fallen position - we are all fallen souls living in the mundane world and we will
do wrong sometimes. No doubt. But the scriptures and our Lord are very
merciful.

They say that if some little boy aged maybe 10 months or 12 months, if he tries to
walk he will first try to walk by holding onto a wall or by taking some help from
his father or mother. He is walking some steps and falling down, but again he is
getting up and trying to walk. If any difficulty will come in our practicing life we
will not be hopeless in any way, but again we will try to make progress. And
when we move forward we will get strength, more and more, through our
experience. By our service to the Lord we will get strength and then we will not
fall down.

But sometimes many disturbances will come to us. Still, we will not be hopeless
or disappointed. Who is giving us hope? Nityananda Prabhu, the original Guru,
He is giving us hope. All the scriptures are giving us hope and if we follow them
then we will be benefited.

This is the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and our Guru-varga (lineage
of inspired teachers). We will enter the deeper, the deepest position: the Abode of

the Lord. There, we will see a miracle waiting for us.

At that time we will laugh to see and remember our previous life. We will laugh when we are remembering our pain in this mundane world, when we were thinking and worrying "Why do I have to leave everything I possess here in this world," and "which way we shall I go."

Many things cause me pain. Pains come to me. But when we are qualified and enter that miraculous environment in the Abode of the Lord then we shall laugh to see or remember the life we lived before.

There is one very nice story. In a short way I am telling it.

Indra, the god of storms and the heavens, is the master of the world called svarga-rajya. Indra was once was cursed by one rishi (sage) and he was forced to be born on earth in a hog body.

A rishi gave a curse "You take birth as a hog. You have committed an offense. You are not qualified to be the king of this swarga-rajya. Go down to the martya loka, the mundane, material world, and relax there living a life as a pig."

Then Indra has gone to live in a hog's body.

Gradually he has got one female hog for a companion. A sow. He started his family life and very happily he became a father. Maybe the father of 100 piglets.

He is happily living his life, with a very powerful body that he has got. No doubt, his body is very fit. Happily he is relaxing with his children and wife.

But after finishing the allotted period of his curse for remaining on earth, Brahma (the creator) himself came to bring him back to his heaven. But Indra was covered by illusion and he was thinking "I am hog." In this way, he was thinking and planning to continue to live his life as a hog day after day. He was collecting so much of the stools that were freely left here and there for him to eat. He was happy with the delicious and tasty foods that he was enjoying. And he was eating that tasty food very happily.

Then Brahma came to say "Oh Indra, your lifetime is finished. You are Indra the king of svarga-rajya, so come back to your abode now. Jump into this pond and your body will be detached from you, from your atma (soul). You come this way with me, very happily."

But Indra was thinking, "Who is that four mouth man, with four heads? I am living here happily with my wife and family. Why shall I go to this heaven? Where is your heaven - I do not know! A nonsense - that is what these things you are telling me are!"

Brahma has seen that with his hog body and his family life Indra has forgotten everything else. So when Brahma was not successful then Brahma threw the hog-Indra's children into the pond.

One by one the piglets are all dead and drowned.

That hog was very much enraged and he tried to attack Brahma, but Brahma was remaining up in the sky and the hog could not reach him. He cannot touch Brahma and he was showing his anger in so many ways: "If I can catch Brahma I will kill him."

But Brahma has seen that Indra's children have gone and died but still Indra has not got any consciousness of spirit. Then Brahma, finally, he thinks, "Indra is too much attached with his wife, so I shall kill his wife."

Yet that hog has a little brain and he is thinking, "Now maybe he will kill my wife."

So he calls to his wife and together they go running away. But then Brahma took his sow wife and threw her in the pond and she was killed. The wife was also dead.

And that hog was so much crying, crying.

Then Brahma came and said to Indra "Why are you crying? I am not your enemy. I am your friend. I am coming to take you to your heaven. It is there waiting for you, your swarga-rajya, with so many beautiful things you cannot conceive."

In his way Brahma told the hog many things. Then that hog was thinking: "Oh this man has been telling me this from the first. Maybe he is my friend. What shall I do with this body now that my whole family is gone? What shall I do now?"

So he jumped in the pond and his body detached from his atma (soul). And he came out of the pond he was seen to have a very nice Indra body, looking beautiful, etc. etc.

Then Indra has seen that his children also have some nice form. They have got some new and better form to live in the svarga-rajya. The children are also waiting on the bank of that pond and with Indra they will live in that celestial heaven. The children of hog-Indra also have got much punya (good karma) and through that they are also going to svarga-loka. No problem.

Indra, seeing that they were also there with him, was surprised. He apologised to Brahma and said to him "I have done much wrong with you. You are really my friend."

And Brahma at that time was telling him " You look and see your hog body again, it is floating in the pond."

Indra said "No, no, no! Not to tell this. It is over."

Then Indra has gone to svarga rajya and seen so many things there. Amrita (nectar), apsara (ladies), parijata (heavenly flower tree). Many types of wealth are there.

The people of svarga-rajya were seeing Indra and they came to invite Indra inside of that heaven. He has gone inside the gates wearing a nice garland etc...

So, here in this mundane world we have many attachments and we have forgotten our own self. But when we see our own beauty and our relatives who are there in the transcendental world we will also feel like Indra when he was coming home.

We will feel much more happiness than that, for the transcendental Abode of the

Lord is far above the celestial heaven of Indra. And it is a place that we will never fall down from once we have gone inside.

Indra's feelings at that time, they can give you some idea of the feeling that you will have when your heart is satisfied. What joyful feeling was in his heart, in his mind, our position is also like his when we see that this world we live in is a mundane place that is not our real home.

And it is not necessary for us to feel disappointed that we do not have the wealth of this world. All the wealth of this world is an insignificant thing.

Anyhow, this story is in the Mahabharata.

Mahaprabhu has given us His mercy. He said:

"Chant the Holy Name, chant the Holy Name, chant the Holy Name! In this age of Kali there is no other way to appeal to God for His Grace, there is no other way, there is no other way!"

This is the only procedure to satisfy our Lord: service to the Divine Name. And it is a very easy process.

Chanting the Name without offense, we will be firm in our own position.

Mahaprabhu said:

"One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, who offers respect to others without expecting to be receive any respect in return, that person can chant the Holy Name of the Lord."

This is the way we shall chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra. And we must be benefited. We will proceed to our life's quest's goal in a very straight and direct way. This is only procedure to satisfy our lord.

६५

सिन्दुह सून्य वेद चन्द्र शाक कुम्भ पूर्णिमा
 सान्द्रह्य चान्द्रकौपराग जात गौर चन्द्रमा
 स्नान दान क्रिश्ण नाम सन्ना तत् परात्परम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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sindhu-sūnya-veda-candra-śāka-kumbha-pūrṇimā
 sāndhya-cāndrakoparāga-jāta-gaura-candramā
 snāna-dāna-kṛṣṇa-nāma-sanga-tat-parātparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

As the golden moon rises in the darkness, Sri Gauracandra appeared in the year 1407 sakabda (1486 AD), at the onset of a lunar eclipse on the full-moon evening in the month of March. When the Lord appeared on Earth as Sri Gauranga, revealing his eternal form in the beautiful home of mother Sachidevi, the residents of Mayapur were bathing in the sacred Ganges and singing the names of Hari together. The residents of Nabadwip were celebrating that auspicious moment, making offerings of different types of treasures to the Lord, and the sound of congregationally chanting the holy names of Hari filled the sky. I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Auspicious Invocation to Saranagati by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

*sri-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu jive daya kari'
 svaparsada sviya dhama saha avatari*

Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya, being gracious upon the jiva souls,
 Along with Your associates and abode You descended to this world

*antyaṇṭa durllabha prema karibare dana
 sikhaya saranagati bhakatera prana*

To distribute freely the love divine, most rare,
 Which is the very life of the devotee.

dainya, atmanivedana, goptrtve varana
'avasya raksibe krsna'—visvasa palana

By teaching exclusive surrender, the life and soul of the devotee —
Humility, self-giving, embracing His guardianship,
Always thinking 'Krishna will certainly protect me'— maintaining this faith;

bhakti-anukula matra karjjera svikara
bhakti-pratikula bhava—varjjanangikara

Acceptance of all activities favourable to devotion;
Embracing rejection of everything adverse to devotion.

Sad-anga saranagati haibe yanhara
tanhara prarthana sune sri-nandakumara

Those who surrender in this sixfold way—
Their prayer will be heard by Krishna the divine son of Nanda.

rupa-sanatana-pade dante trna kari'
bhaktivinoda pade dui pada dhari'

Taking in his mouth a straw, falling at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa-Sanatana,
Srila Bhaktivinode Bhaktivinoda clasps Their holy lotus feet.

६६

आत्म सिद्द्ह सावलील पूर्ण सौक्ख्य लक्ष्मणम्
 स्वानुब्धाव मत्त त्रित्य कीर्त्तनात्म वन्तनम्
 अद्वयैक लक्ष्मण पूर्ण तत्त्व तत् परात्परम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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ātma-siddha-sāvalīla-pūrṇa-saukhyā-lakṣaṇam
 svānubhāva-matta-ṇṛtya-kīrtanātmā-vañtanam
 advayaika-lakṣya-pūrṇa-tattva-tat-parātparam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

This is the all conquering conclusion: the highest conception of the ultimate reality must also be the highest form of ecstasy (*ananda*). Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Krishna, ecstasy himself, tasting his own sweetness and dancing in ecstatic joy.

He is the source of that self-evident perfect bliss which is full of natural loving pastimes. His dancing (*nṛtya*) arises from the intoxication of overflowing spiritual bliss, and his chanting (*kīrtan*) is the distribution of bliss to others. These two characteristics are the two natural symptoms of the Absolute: the Absolute exists by itself and for itself. By Itself means that the Absolute has no other cause beyond itself - the Absolute is self manifest. For Itself means that the Absolute has its own purpose to fulfil. The supreme reality is not subject to any influences or plans originating from some other cause. Sri Chaitanya is self-absorbed, and within himself he is feeling full satisfaction. So much so that he is dancing in ecstasy. His own holy name is the cause of his ecstasy, which he expresses through his chanting. This dynamo creates ecstatic energy which makes him dance and his chanting and dancing is distribution of that ecstasy to others. Thus, the cause is the effect.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

The all conquering conclusion

by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj

Svarupa Damodara, the personal secretary of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has explained the meaning of His appearance in his memoirs, which were recorded in the Caitanya-charitamrita of Kaviraja Goswami. He writes:

*radha kṛṣṇa-pranaya-vikṛtiḥ hlādinī śaktir āsmad
ekatmanav api bhuvī pura deha-bhedam gatau tau
cāitanyakhyam prakatam adhuna tad-dvayam caikyam aptam
radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarupam*

Sometimes Radha and Krishna are combined; sometimes They are separate. They are separate in Dvapara-yuga, and in Kali-yuga they are combined as Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Both are eternal expressions of the same Absolute Truth. Summer, autumn, winter, and spring continue in a cyclic order; it cannot be said that summer is the beginning and winter comes later. So, the pastimes of Sri Radha and Krishna are eternally being enacted. In ancient times, sometimes Radha and Krishna divided Themselves and showed Their pastimes; again both of Them, the potency and the owner of the potency, are combined and closely embraced as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. The predominating and the predominated moiety are mixed, and an extraordinary ecstatic feeling is there. Krishna is overpowered by His potency, and He Himself is searching after His own Self: *kṛṣṇasya atmanusandhana*. Krishna Himself is engaged in the search for Sri Krishna, Reality the Beautiful. The influence of Radharani over Krishna has transformed Him into a devotee, and He is searching Himself. Sweetness is tasting Itself and becoming mad. And it is living sweetness; not dead or static, but dynamic ecstasy sweetness endowed with life. And He is tasting Himself, the personification of happiness, ecstasy, and beauty, and dancing in madness, and His performance of kirtana means distributing that ecstasy to others. The ultimate sweetness, or ananda, is such that no other thing exists that can taste itself and express its own happiness with such intensity. I have described Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the Prema Dhama Deva Stotram:

*atma-siddha-sava lila-purna-saukhya-laksanam
svanubhava-matta-nrtya-kirtanatma-vantanam
advayaika-laksya-purna-tattva-tat-paratparam
prema-dhama-devam-eva naumi gaura-sundaram*

"The highest conception of the Absolute Truth must also be the highest form of ananda, ecstasy. Mahaprabhu's dancing indicates that He is full of ecstasy, and His kirtana is distribution of that rasa. So, if we scientifically search out who Mahaprabhu is, we cannot but find that He is the Ultimate Reality. He is mad in tasting His own internal nectar, and His dancing is the outcome of His transcendental ecstasy. And He is chanting, distributing that to others. So, studying quite closely the character of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, we cannot but think that He is the Supreme Absolute Truth, in its fullest, and most dynamic expression."

६७

श्री पुरीश्वरानुकम्पि लब्ध दीक्ष ह दैवतम्
 केशवाक्त्रा भारती सकाश केश रक्शितम्
 माधवानुद्धी किशोर क्रिष्ण सेवनादरम्
 प्रेम धाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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śrī-purīśvarānukampi-labdha-dīkṣa-daivatam
 keśavākhyā-bhārātī-sakāśa-keśa-rakṣitam
 mādhavānuddhī-kīśora-kṛṣṇa-sevanādaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Lord Gaurāṅga accepted initiation from Sri Isvara Puri, bestowing great fortune upon him. Lord Gaurāṅga accepted the garments of a renunciate (*śannyasi*) from Kesava Bharatī and, on that day when Sri Gaurāhari shaved his beautiful curly hair, the Loving Lord Sri Gaurāṅsundar ardently began his missionary work, journeying though the world searching for his lost servants. Lord Chaitanya adored pure loving service to Sri Kṛṣṇa in the mood of amorous devotion (*madhura rasa*), as was shown by Sri Madhavendra Puri. He considered this mood of devotion to be the highest.

I sing with joy the unending glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Guru Parampara

(Verses 1 to 9 by Srīla Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvatī Thakura)

*kṛṣṇa hoite catur-mukha, hoy kṛṣṇa-sevonmukha,
 brahma hoite naradera matī
 narada hoite vyasa, madhva kohe vyasa-dasa,
 purnaprajna padmanabha gati*

In the beginning of creation the science of devotional service was received by the four-headed Brahma from the Supreme Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa. Devarsi Narada's understanding of this divine science was obtained from Brahma. The great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipayana Vyasa, who was empowered to compile the Vedic literatures, became a disciple of Devarsi Narada. Sripada Madhvacharyya, the founder of the

suddha-dvaita school of Vedanta philosophy, who visited Vyasadeva at Badarikasram in the thirteenth century to learn from him Vedanta philosophy, calls himself a servant of Krsna Dvaipayana Vyasa. Purnaprajna Tirtha [Madhva] is the guru and sole refuge of Padmanabha Tirtha.

*nrhari madhava-bamse, aksobhya paramahamse,
sisya boli' angikara kore
aksobhyera sisya jaya- tirtha name paricaya,
tanra dasye jnanasindhu tore*

The two other principal disciples of Madhva are Nrhari Tirtha and Madhava Tirtha. Madhava Tirtha accepted the great paramahamsa Aksobhya Tirtha as a disciple. The principal disciple of Aksobhya Tirtha was known as Jayatirtha. Jayatirtha's service was for his disciple Jnanasindhu.

*tanhara hoite dayanidhi, tanra dasa vidyanidhi,
rajendra hoilo tanha hoite
tanhara kinkora jaya- dharmma name paricaya,
parampara jano bhalo mate*

Dayanidhi received the science of devotional service from Jnanasindhu, and the servant of Dayanidhi was Vidyanidhi [Vidyadhiraja Tirtha]. Rajendra Tirtha became a disciple of Vidyadhiraja Tirtha. Rajendra Tirtha's servant was known as Jayadharma or Vijayadhva Tirtha. In this way you should properly understand this disciplic succession.

*jayadharmma-dasye khyati, sri purusottama-yati
tan' ha'te brahmanya-tirtha suri
vyasatirtha tanra dasa, laksmipati vyasa-dasa,
tanha hoite madhavendra puri*

The great sannyasi Sri Purusottama Tirtha received his knowledge in the service of his guru, Vijayadhva Tirtha [Jayadharma]. The principal disciple of Purusottama Tirtha was Subrahmanya Tirtha. His servant was the great Vyasatirtha [Vyasa Raya]. Vyasatirtha's servant was Laksmipati Tirtha, whose disciple was Madhavendra Puri Goswami.

*madhavendra puri-bara, sisya-bara sri-iswara,
nityananda, sri-advaita vibhu
isvara-purike dhanya, korilena sri-caitanya,
jagad-guru gaura Mahaprabhu*

The chief disciple of Madhavendra Puri was Isvara Puri, and two of his other disciples were the renowned incarnations of Godhead Sri Nityananda and Advaita Acharyya. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the spiritual preceptor of all the worlds, made Isvara Puri greatly fortunate by accepting him as His spiritual master.

*mahaprabhu sri-caitanya, radha-krsna nahe anya,
rupanuga janera jivana
visvambhara priyankara, sri svarupa-damodara,
sri goswami rupa-sanatana*

Mahaprabhu Sri Chaitanya is nondifferent from Sri Sri Radha and Krsna and is the very life of those Vaisnavas who follow Sri Rupa Goswami. Sri Svarupa Damodara Goswami, Rupa Goswami, and Sanatana Goswami were the givers of great happiness to Visvambhara [Sri Chaitanya].

*rupapriya mahajana, jiva-raghunatha hana, tanra priya kavi krsnadasa
krsnadasa-priyabara, narottama sevapara, yanra pada visvanatha-asa*

The great souls Jiva Goswami and Raghunatha dasa Goswami became very dear to Rupa Goswami. Jiva Goswami was a disciple of Rupa Goswami. Raghunatha dasa Goswami, a disciple of Advaita Acharyya's disciple Yadunandana Acharyya, was accepted by Rupa and Sanatana as their third brother. Raghunatha dasa Goswami's beloved student was Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami. Krsnadasa Kaviraja was an intimate friend of Lokanatha Goswami. They lived together in Vrmdavana and always discussed the topics of Krsna with one another. Lokanatha Goswami, a disciple of Gadadhara Pandita, had only one disciple, whose name was Narottama dasa. Narottama dasa was always engaged in the service of his guru, and he also engaged himself in the service of his guru's intimate friend. Thus he became very dear to Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami. To serve the feet of Narottama dasa Thakura was the only desire of Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura, who was the fourth acharyya in disciplic succession from Narottama dasa.

*visvanatha-bhakta-satha, baladeva jagannatha, tanra priya sri-bhaktivinoda
maha-bhagavata-bara, sri-gaurakisora-bara, hari-bhajanete janra moda*

Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura was the siksa-guru [instructing spiritual master] of Baladeva Vidyabhusana, to whom he taught the precepts of Srimad-Bhagavatam. Jagannatha dasa Babaji was a very prominent acharyya after Sri Baladeva Vidyabhusana and was the beloved siksa-guru of Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura. Bhaktivinoda Thakura's intimate friend and associate was the eminent mahabhagavata Sri Gaurakisora dasa Babaji, whose sole joy was found in hari-bhajana.

*tadamuga-mahajana sri-krsna-kirttana-dhara jeba dila puri jaga kama
sri varsabhanavibara sada sevyā sevapara tanhara dayitadasa nama*

The followers of Srila Gaurakisora dasa Babaji fill up the world with the wealth of Sri Krsna-kirttan. He who is always serving Krsna the dearmost lover of Radharani, is Sri Varsabhanavi Dayita Dasa.

*tadabhinna deha-divya svarupa-rupa-raghu-jivya sada sevyā janra padapadma
susiddhanta murti-dhara sri sridhara guruvāra rupanuga-sadhu sreya sadma*

The nondifferent personality and embodiment of bhakti-siddhanta as well as Srila Saraswati Thakura; and who is living within the conception of Srila Swarup Damodar, Srila Rupa Goswami and Srila Raghunath dasa Goswami; and whose lotus feet are always the worshipable, and the happy shelter of the followers of Rupa Goswami, he is Srila Sridhar Dev-Goswami.

*tanra priya mano' bhista sthapanē sadasacesta bhakti sundara sri govinda nama
ei parampara dhana sabe gaura-nijajana tandra ucchiste mora kama*

He who is a very dear disciple of that Srila Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj, and who is establishing his divine conception, and who is fulfilling his desire continuously, he is Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswami. This is our grand preceptorial line and all of them are very dear to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. My sustenance is their remnants alone.

६८

सिन्दुह बिन्दु वेद चन्द्र शाक फाल्गुनोदितम्
 न्यास सोम नेत्र वेद चन्द्र शाक बोद्धितम्
 वान वान वेद चन्द्र शाक लोचनान्तरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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sindhu-bindu-veda-candra-śāka-phālgunoditam
 nyāsa-soma-netra-veda-candra-śāka-bodhitam
 vāpa-vāpa-veda-candra-śāka-locanāntaram
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

I offer my respectful obeisances unto Sri Gauranga, who rose like a golden moon in Sri Mayapura in 1407 sakabda (1486 AD), who revealed the pastime of accepting the renounced order in 1431 sakabda (1510 AD), in order to benedict the entire material universe, and who disappeared beyond the vision of ordinary people in 1455 sakabda (1534 AD).

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

६९

श्री स्वरूप राय सना हर्षह शेषह गहोश्हनम्
 शिक्शहनाशतकाक्ख क्रिश्ह कीर्तनैक पोश्हनम्
 प्रेम नाम मात्र विश्व जीवनैक सम्बहरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमिगौर सुन्दरम्

69

śrī-svarūpa-rāya-sanga-harṣa-śeṣa-ghoṣaṇam
 śikṣaṇāṣṭakākhyā-kṛṣṇa-kīrtanaika-poṣaṇam
 prema-nāma-mātra-viśva-jīvanaika-sambharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumigaura-sundaram

With great joy Sri Gaurasundara told his dearmost associates Sri Swarup Damodar and Ramananda Raya that the process of congregational chanting of the holy names of Krishna bestows the highest benediction upon the living entities in this age of Kali:

*harse prabhu kahe suna svarupa ramaraya
 nama samkirtana kalau parama upaya*

In his famous composition Sri-Siksastakam also, Lord Gauranga has placed the chanting of Lord Krishna's names on the topmost level of importance. The Supreme Lord further taught that chanting Lord Krishna's names in pure love of Godhead perfectly nourishes and fully satisfies all the living entities in the universe.

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Siksastakam,
 the Precepts of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
 (spoken by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu himself)

*ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-dava nirvapanam
 sreyah kairava candrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu-jivanam
 anandambudh ivardhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam
 sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-kṛṣṇa-sankirtanam*

The holy name of Krishna cleanses the mirror of the heat and extinguishes the fire of misery in the forest of birth and death. As the evening lotus blooms in the moon's cooling rays, the heart begins to blossom in the nectar of the name. And at last the soul awakens to its real inner treasure a life of love with Krishna. Again and again tasting nectar, the soul dives and surfaces in the ever-increasing ocean of ecstatic joy. All phases of the self of which we may conceive are fully satisfied and purified, and at last conquered by the all-auspicious influence of the holy name of Krishna.

*namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktis
tatrarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava kṛpā bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah*

Oh my Lord, Your holy name bestows auspiciousness upon all. And You have unlimited names such as Krishna and Govinda by which You reveal Yourself. In Your many holy names You have kindly invested all Your transcendental potency. And in chanting these names, there are no strict rules concerning time or place. Out of Your causeless mercy, You have descended in the form of divine sound, but my great misfortune is that I have no love for Your holy name.

*trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniyah sada harih*

One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more forbearing than a tree who gives due honour to others without desiring it for himself is qualified to allways chant the holy name of Krishna.

*na dhanam na janam na sundanm
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye
mama janmani-janmanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*

Oh Lord, I have no desires to accumulate wealth, followers, beautiful women, or salvation. My only prayer is for Your causeless devotional service, birth after birth.

*ayi nanda-tanuja kinkaram
patitam mam visame bhavambudhau
krpaya tava pada-pankaja
sthita-dhuli-sadrsam vicintaya*

Oh son of Nanda Maharaja, I am Your eternal servant, yet because of my own karma, I have fallen into this terrible ocean of birth and death. Accept this fallen soul and consider me a particle of dust at Your holy lotus feet.

*nayanam galad-asru-dharaya
vadanam gadgada-ruddhaya gira
pulakair nicitam vapuh kada
tava nama-grahane bhavisyati*

Oh Lord, when will tears flow from my eyes like waves? And my voice tremble in ecstasy. When will the hairs of my body stand on end while chanting Your holy name?

*yugayitam nimesena caksusa pravrsayitam
sunnyayitam jagat sanam govinda-virahena me*

Oh Govinda! Without You, the world is empty. Tears are flooding my eyes like rain, and a moment seems like forever.

*aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam
adarsanan marma-hatam karotu va
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah*

Krishna may embrace me in love or trample me under His feet. He may break my heart by hiding Himself from me. Let that debauchee do whatever He likes, but He will always be the only Lord of my life.

७०

प्रेम हेम देव देहि दासरेषह मन्यताम्
 क्शहम्यताम् महापराद्दह राशिरेषह गन्यताम्
 रूप किन्करेषहु रामानन्द दास सम्भरम्
 प्रेम द्दहाम देवम् ऐव नौमि गौर सुन्दरम्

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prema hema-deva dehi-dāsareṣa manyatām
 kṣamyatām mahāparādha-rāṣīreṣa-ganyatām
 rūpa-kinkareṣu rāmānanda-dāsa-sambharam
 prema-dhāma-devam eva naumi gaura-sundaram

Oh my golden Lord! O golden volcano of divine love! O ocean of unalloyed dedication! Kindly grant me your treasure of divine love! Please give some slight attention to this fallen soul and pardon his unlimited offenses. There are so many servants of Sri Rupa who are so dear to you. My only aspiration is that you count me as one of those servitors. O Gaurasundara, you are the sole protector and embodiment of good fortune for me, Ramananda dasa (Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj).

I fall at the feet of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the golden volcano of divine love.

Illumination:

Sri Rupa Manjari Pada
 by Srila Narottama das Thakur

sri-rupa-manjari-pada, sei mora sampada,
 sei mor bhajana-pujana
 sei mora prana-dhana, sei mora abharana,
 sei mor jivanera jivana

sei mora rasa-nidhi, sei mor vancha-siddhi,
 sei mor vedera dharama
 sei brata, sei tapa, sei mora mantra-japa,
 sei mor dharama-karama

anukula habe viddhi, se-pade hoibe siddhi,
nirakhibo e dui nayane
se rupa-madhuri-rasi, prana-kuvalaya-sasi,
praphullita habe nisi-dine

tuya adarsana-ahi, garale jaralo dehi,
ciro-dina tapita jivana
ha ha rupa koro doya, deho more pada-chaya,
narottama loilo sarana

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaj:

Sri-rupa-manjari-pada, sei mora sampada, sei mor bhajana-pujana- my everything is Sri Rupa Goswami's holy feet. We are to discuss so many classifications and positions of rasa: santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, madhura. And in madhura-rasa Radharani's camp is special. Then again there are so many gradations of sakhis. Then there is the class of the manjaris, the younger girls, and they have more freedom to approach: when Radha and Govinda are in union in a private environment, the manjaris can still approach. They have such freedom to visit Them. If any materials of service are necessary, the sakhis send the manjaris to that place. The sakhis do not approach there. In that way the manjaris enjoy the best confidence. The most secret service of both can be supplied through the manjaris. In the highest position they have free entrance, and their leader is Rupa Manjari. She is understood to be the leader of the whole group of younger girls, the manjaris, therefore in madhura-bhajan she is all-in-all. This has been taught to us by Narottama Thakur. For us - and the younger batch - she is our highest resort.

Sei mora sampada- my wealth is there in her feet. *Sei mor bhajana-pujana* - my worship and service is also in her. *Sei mora prana-dhana, sei mora abharana*- the very wealth and gist of my life is there; and the ornaments of my life, if any there may be, that is within her grace. *Sei mor jivanera jivana* - indeed, the very life of my life, if there is anything, that is also her. I am for her pleasure.

Sei mora rasa-nidhi - if there is anything, the source of any and all desirable ecstasy is only to be found there. The mine, source, and fountainhead of all rasa is there in her feet. *Sei mora vancha-siddhi* - and if I am to expect any other fulfilment in life, that is also there in her feet. *Sei mor vedera dharama* - if any

duty is recommended by the Vedas for me, I would like that such duty be at her feet.

Sei brata, sei tapa - if at all there is any desired accumulation from any penance or observance of vows, that is also to be found there - *sei mora mantra-japa* - and the continuous repetition of a mantra in japa all ends there: all things have only one end in my case, and that is that they all meet in different phases in the feet of Rupa Manjari. If she is satisfied then the variegated nature of all sorts of my devotional practices are satisfied. *Sei mor dharama-karama* - and any of my conceptions of duty or activity of any phases or form all have one end and meet in one point: the holy feet of Rupa Manjari.

Anukula habe viddhi, se-pade hoibe siddhi - I only pray to the controller who is at the root of all these arrangements of affairs in this world, "Please connect me there. Oh Absolute Manager, may you grant my prayer that all my tendencies may go to attain her favour. *Nirakhibo e dui nayane* - and it will be so very intense and concrete as if I can see it with these eyes. It will not be vague, abstract, or imagination, but I want the most concrete realisation by the grace of the Absolute Manager."

Se rupa-madhuri-rasi, prana-kuvalaya-sasi - what sort of high class beauty is there in her holy feet! I want to jump. Let my heart be a lotus. There are two classes of lotus: the white lotus came from the sun and the red from the moon. The kuvalaya is a mixture of the two. The lustre of her body will feed me day and night as the life of my life which is compared to a kuvalaya. The kuvalaya is fed and nourished by the lustre of the moon, and her holy feet are the moon, and my very vitality is likened to the lotus. May the lustre of her beauty maintain and nourish my heart of hearts. *Praphullita habe nisi-dine* - and the lotus of my heart will grow by that ray, and dance.

Tuya adarsana-ahi - this is my prayer, but what is my present condition? My present condition is in the negative side, my Mistress. My present position is such that without having a sight of you, Your Grace, my heart will burn into ashes. That is my present position. *Garale jaralo dehi* - this is just like the poison of a cobra which produces pain within my heart. I have been bitten by a snake, and what is that snake? It is that I am not getting any direct contact with you, Your Grace. The serpent's poison has captured my heart and I am going to die. *Ciro-dina tapita jivana* - and this is not a sudden thing, but from the beginning I have

been suffering this sort of pain of separation from such a beautiful and hopeful life of fulfilment.

Ha ha rupa koro doya, deho more pada-chaya, narottama loilo sarana - but I have now reached the extreme position and for the last time I am begging for your favour; otherwise I am going to be finished.

This was composed by Narottama Thakur in praise of Srila Rupa Goswami. In this way he has given us light of the higher quarter of bhajan life. This sampradaya is named as the Rupanuga-sampradaya, and our Guru-parampara and all these things are adjusted according to that. He wrote many songs and they are of very substantive firmament, very ecstatic, and of deep faith.

७१

सश्रद्दह् सप्त दशकम् प्रेम दहामेति नामकम्
 स्तवम् को 'पि पठन् गौरम् रादहा श्याम मयम् व्रजेत्

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saśraddhaḥ sapta-daśakam prema-dhāmeti-nāmakam
 stavam ko 'pi paṭhan gauram rādhā-śyāma-mayam vrajet

He who studies, recites or sings with regard, faith and devotion these seventy verses by the name of Prema-dhama-deva-stotram will obtain the loving devotional service of Sri Gaurasundara, who is Syamasundara himself, resplendent in the mood and lustre of Srimati Radharani.

७२

पन्चमै शत गौराब्दे श्री सिद्धहान्त सरस्वती
श्रीदहरह को 'पि तच् चिश्नस् त्रिदन्दी नौति सुन्दरम्
72

pañcame śata-gaurābde śrī-siddhānta-sarasvatī
śrīdharah ko 'pi tac chiśyas tridandī-nauti-sundaram

These prayers have been composed in the fifth century after the appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu by a certain sannyasi disciple of Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami named Sridhara.

Illumination:

Prayer unto Sri Sri Dayita Dasa
by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

*nite yasmin nisante nayana-jala-bharaih snata-gatrarbudanam
uccair utkrosatam sri-vrsakapi-sutayadhiraya sviya-gosthim
prthvi gadhandhakarair hrta-nayana-manivavrtā yena hina
yatrasau tatra sighram kṛpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

At the end of the night of Sri Sri Vrsabhanunandini, She suddenly took him to her entourage, withdrawing him from the company of throngs of grief-stricken souls. A great cry of lamentation arose, their bodies were bathed by their tears. When he was thus stolen away, this world was plunged into the deep darkness of one whose eyes have been stolen away (hrta - stolen away; nayana-mani - jewel of the eye - the internal name of Saraswati Thakura is 'Nayana-mani'). (Bereft of the vision of my Divine Master,) O my sorrowful eyes (dina-nayana), (or, O savior of the fallen [Dina-nayana],) wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there! (Although he is my Master named 'Nayana,' or 'one who brings us near,' in his mercy he shows the miserliness of not taking me unto his company.)

*yasya sri-pada-padmat pravahati jagati prema-piyusa-dhara
yasya sri-pada-padma-cyuta-madhu satatam bhrtya-bhṛngan vibharti
yasya sri-pada-padmam vraja-rasika-jano modate samprasasya
yatrasau tatra sighram kṛpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

From his lotus feet, the nectarine river of divine love flows throughout the universe; his servitors, like bees, maintain their lives drinking the honey that falls from his lotus feet; and the pure devotees in the shelter of the confidential mellows of Vraja revel in the bliss of singing the glories of his lotus feet: O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.

*vatsalyam yac ca pitro jagati bahumatam kaitavam kevalam tat
dampatyam dasyutaiva svajana-gana-kṛta bandhuta vancaneti
vaikuntha-sneha-murteh pada-nakha-kiranair yasya sandarsito 'smi
yatra sau tatra sikhram kṛpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

Parental affection, so highly esteemed in the world, is a colossal hoax; socially recognized pure matrimonial love is nothing but dacoitry (in that it plunders away both the husband's and the wife's eagerness for the chance to acquire the treasure of love unadulterated by the superficiality of familial prejudice); and common friendship is merely deception: I have gleaned these thoughts from the rays of light that emanate from the toenails of the holy feet of that great personality, the embodiment of supramundane affection. O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.

*ya vani kantha-lagna vilasati satatam kṛṣṇa-caitanyacandre
karna-krodaj-jananam kim u nayana-gatam saiva murtim prakasya
niladri-sasya netrarpana-bhavana-gata netra-tarabhidheya
yatra sau tatra sikhram kṛpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

The divine message sung by Sri Krishna Chaitanyacandra had its continuous play in the ears of the people. From the ear, did he, just to fulfill the purport of the name 'Nayana-mani,' reveal his form to the eye, making his advent in the mansion (temple) favored by the glance of Sri Nilacalacandra (at the time of the Rathayatra festival)? O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul (Mahapurusa) may be, please swiftly take this servitor there.

*gaurendor asta-saile kim u kanaka-ghano hema-hrj-jambu-nadya
avirbhutah pravarsair nikhila-jana-padam plavayan dava-dagdham
gauravirbhava-bhumau rajasi ca sahasa samjugopa svayam svam
yatra sau tatra sikhram kṛpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

Drawing up the pure golden waters of the Jambu River mentioned in Srimad-Bhagavatam, has this golden cloud arisen on the mountain where the golden moon (Sri Gauracandra) descended (set), just to shower down torrents of rain upon the whole countryside that was scorched by the forest fire (of threefold sufferings), then suddenly conceal himself in the dust of the land of the Advent of Sri Gauranga? O Dina-nayana, wherever that Great Master may be now, please quickly take this servitor to that place.

*gauro gaurasya sisyo gurur api jagatam gayatam gaura-gatha
gaude gaudiya-gosthy-asrita-gana-garima dravide gaura-garvi
gandharva gaura-vatyo giri-dhara-parama-preyasam yo garistho
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

He is of the same hue as Sri Gaura, and although he, who sings the tidings of Sri Gaura, is the (natural) Guru of the whole universe, he accepted discipleship to a great devotee called Sri Gaura Kisora ('adolescent Gaura'). In the whole Gaura-mandala he is the repository of the glory of those who grant entrance into the fold of the pure Gaudiya Vaisnavas. He proudly ascended the lofty throne of preaching the glories of the gift of the Golden Lord Sri Gaura (the service of Sri Radha-Govinda in Vraja) to the Vaisnavas of Dravida (the devotees in South India, who are generally worshippers of Laksmi-Narayana). The glory of his dignity shines even in the group of Sri Gandharva, and he holds a pre-eminent position in the intimate circle of Sri Giridhari, that is, he is the most beloved of Lord Mukunda. O Dina-nayana, where that great soul is now, please swiftly take this servitor there.

*yo radha-krsna-namamrta-jala-nidhinaplavayad-visvam etad
amlecchasesa-lokam dvija-nrpa-vanijam sudra-sudrapakrstam
muktaih siddhair agamyah patita-jana-sakho gaura-karunya-saktir
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

He inundated the whole universe of countless living beings - whether brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, less than sudra, and even mleccha - with the oceanic nectar of the holy name of Sri Radha-Krishna. Although unapproachable by the liberationists and yogic perfectionists, he is known as the friend of the fallen, the mercy potency of Sri Gauranga. O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul may be,

please swiftly take this servitor there.

*apy asa vartate tat purata-vara-vapur lokitum loka-sandam
dirgham nilabja-netram tila-kusuma-nasam ninditarddhendubhalam
saumyam subhramsu-dantam sata dala-vadanam dirgha-bahum varenyam
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

Do I have a hope to ever see that beautiful golden personality who makes everything auspicious for the world? Do I have a hope to ever behold that tall figure once again, his blue lotus eyes, his nose that excels the charm of the Tila flower, his forehead that shames the half-moon, his graceful lotus face, his gleaming pearl-white teeth, his long arms extending to his knees? O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul has gone, please swiftly take this servitor there.

*gaurabde sunya-bananvita-nigamamite krsna-pakse caturthyam
pause mase maghayam amara-gana-guror-vasare vai nisante
daso yo radhikaya atisaya-dayito nitya-lila-pravisto
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

In the year of our Lord Gauranga 450, in the month of Pausa, on the fourth day of the dark fortnight of the moon in the star of Magha, at the closing of the night of Brhaspativara (5.30 a.m., 1st January, 1937), that most beloved attendant of Srimati Vrsabhanunandini entered into the eternal pastimes. O Dina-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, quickly take this servitor there to him.

*ha-ha-karair-jananam guru-carana-jusam puritabhur-nabhas ca
yato 'sau kutra visvam prabhupada-virahad-dhanta sunyayitam me
padabje nitya-bhrtyah ksanam api viraham notsahe sodhum atra
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam*

The entire earth and skies were filled with the cries of anguish of the people, and of the disciples devoted to the service of Sri Gurudeva's lotus feet. Where has that Great Master gone? Alas! today the whole universe seems empty, in the separation of Prabhupada. The servitor of Gurudeva cannot endure even a moment of his separation. O Dina-nayana, wherever, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there to him.



